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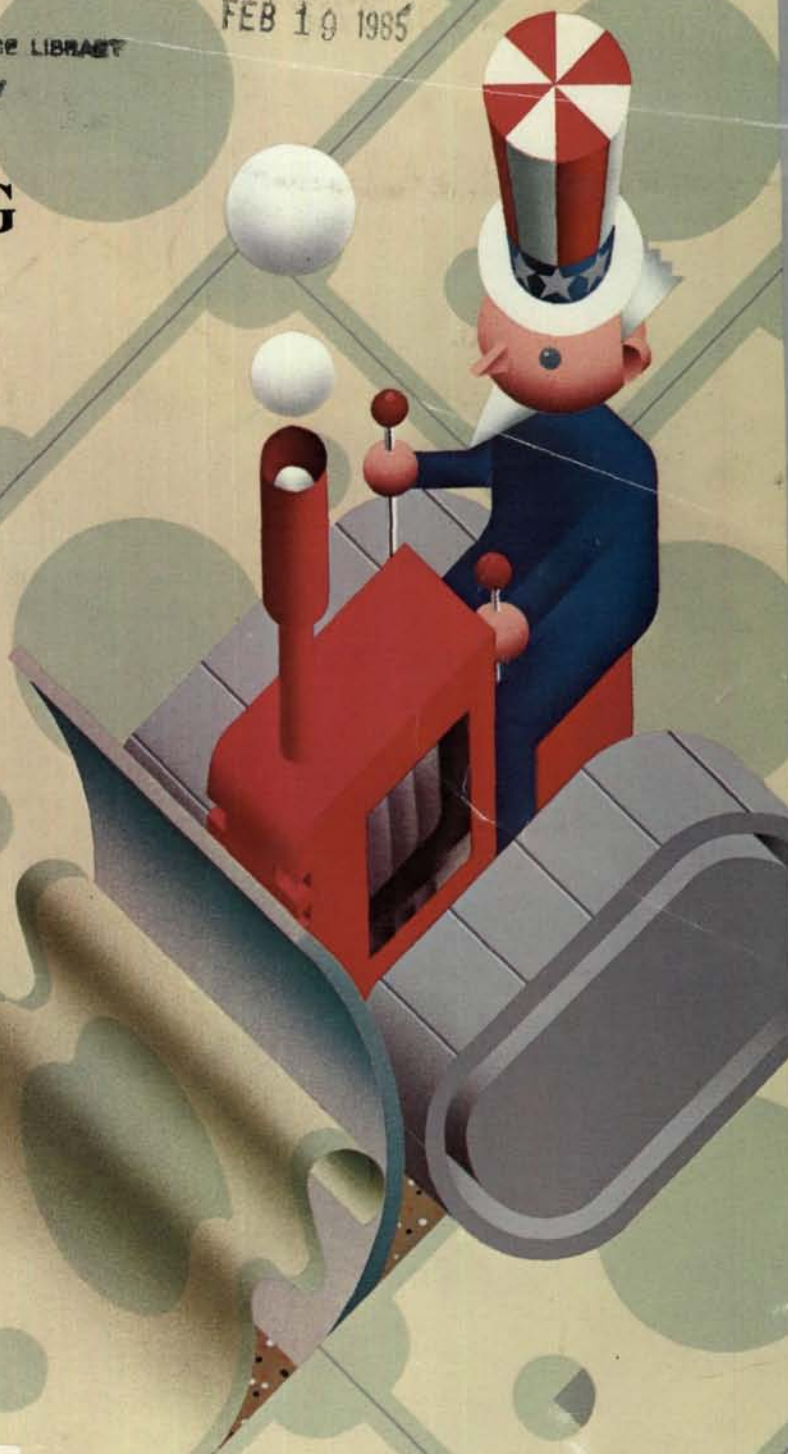
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THE CHANGING ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

BY JAMES FALLOWS



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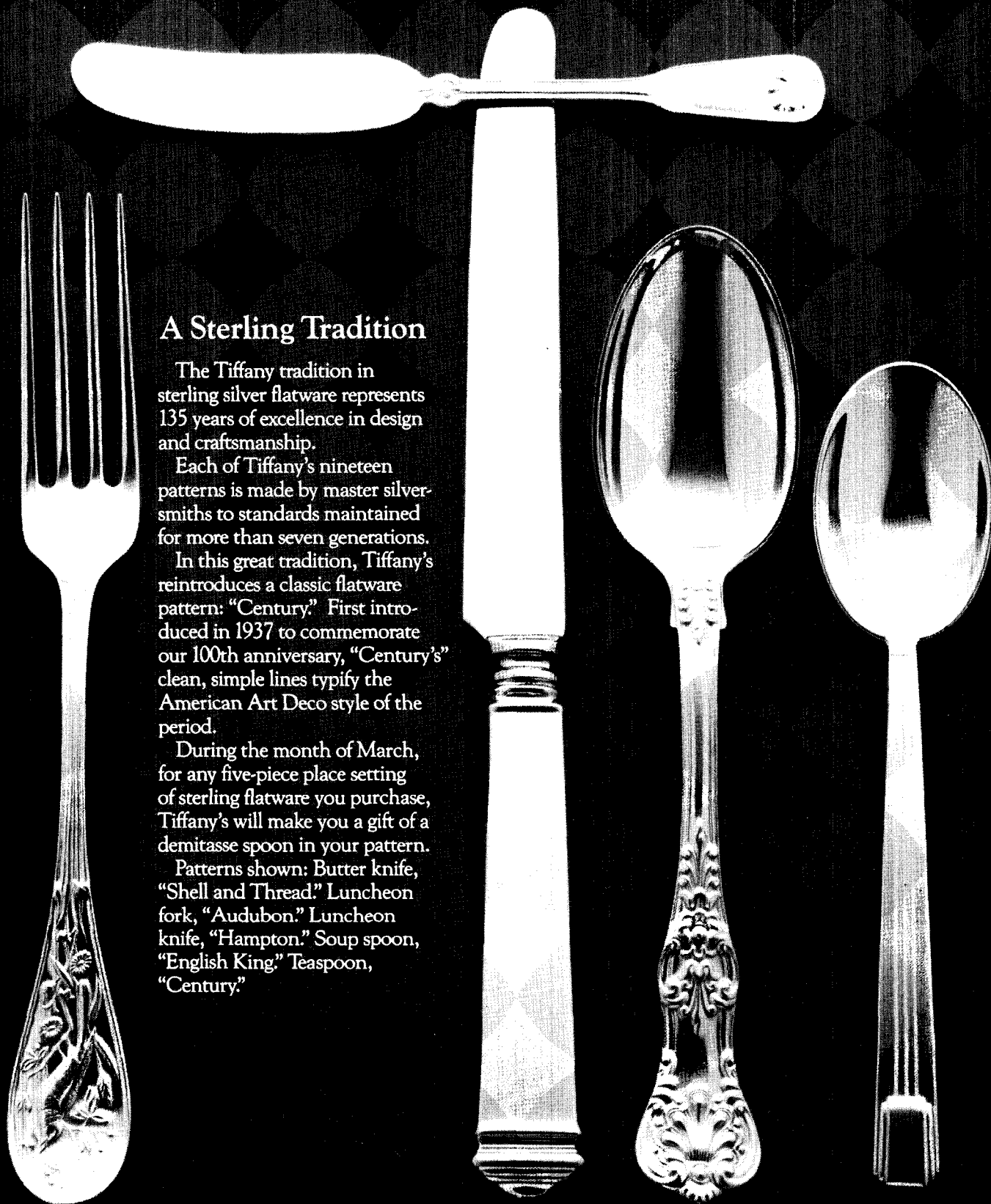
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ARTICLES

- 47 AMERICA'S CHANGING ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE** **JAMES FALLOWS**
Are we in the midst of a major economic transformation—the deindustrialization of America—and if we are, should we view it as baneful or benign? An analysis of the economic battle of the decade

- 81 ISRAEL'S CHARIOT OF FIRE** **PETER HELLMAN**
The Merkava, one of the world's best tanks, has been produced by a country that had next to no experience building heavy machinery

REPORTS & COMMENT

- 24 CAMPAIGNS: SERVING TV WINNERS** **STEVEN STARK**
- 29 NEW YORK: WHERE WILL ALL THE GARBAGE GO?** **J. TEVERE MACFADYEN**
- 38 ARGENTINA: A PROSECUTION IN TROUBLE** **ELIZABETH FOX**

HUMOR AND FICTION

- 44 THREE WOMEN—HATING, LOVING, AND JUST "LIVING" THROUGH THE DIFFICULT EIGHTIES** **LYNN CARAGANIS**
- 70 DOUBLE LIVES** **SHEILA SCHWARTZ**

POETRY

- 56 THE PHOTOGRAPH** **ELLEN BRYANT VOIGT**

- 74 AN APOLOGY TO A FRIEND FOR SHOOTING A HOLE IN HIS CEILING** **JAMES MCKEAN**

- 93 MATERIALISM** **JAMES GALVIN**

BOOKS

- 116 A PRE-WAR IDYLL** **ANTHONY BURGESS**
This Real Night by Rebecca West
- 118 THE WORLD VIEW OF THE RIGHT** **PHILIP GEYELIN**
Grave New World by Michael A. Ledeen
- 120 THE ART OF CRITICISM** **LEO BERSANI**
Henry James: Literary Criticism edited by Leon Edel and Mark Wilson

- 124 BRIEF REVIEWS** **PHOEBE-LOU ADAMS**

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

- 4 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**
- 77 FIRST ENCOUNTERS** **EDWARD SOREL AND NANCY CALDWELL SOREL**
- 105 MUSIC: A VISIONARY COMPOSER** **ANNALYN SWAN**
- 109 PHOTOGRAPHY: FASHION PLATES** **HAL HINSON**
- 128 THE ATLANTIC PUZZLER** **EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON**

Cover illustration by José Cruz



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IMPROVING CONGRESS

As a student of Congress for some twenty years, I enjoyed reading "What's Wrong With Congress?" (December *Atlantic*).

I question, however, Gregg Easterbrook's proposals for improving congressional behavior. For example:

(1) "Eliminate the appropriations committees." In order to do so, you would have to persuade the current membership (fifty-nine House members; twenty-nine senators) to abandon their "turf" and transfer to other committees. Not likely.

(2) "Congressmen should receive a substantial raise." Most outside observers would agree. A salary of \$100,000 with no outside stipends, or a cap of, say, \$10,000 a year for honoraria, sounds reasonable. But try selling that to the American public at a time of great concern about budget deficits.

(3) "Lobbyists should be denied access to the Capitol." Aside from the hue and cry such a proposal would engender, it's a direct violation of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech . . . or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Easterbrook concludes: "Before Congress can lead the nation, it must first be able to lead itself." Hardly any political theorist, historian, or political scientist would expect that the 100 senators and 435 House members who compose Congress would be able to "lead the nation." Congress is preeminently a representative body; leadership of the country must come from the President, with Congress free to check and balance. The best that one can hope for is that members of the House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans, will choose wise and effective party and committee leaders.

ROBERT L. PEABODY

*Professor of Political Science
The Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Md.*

Gregg Easterbrook's indictment of Congress is cogent, but at least part of his prescription for change is unconstitutional. I refer specifically to his sug-

gestions that spending in House races be limited to \$100,000 and in Senate races to \$500,000, and that advertisements be limited to pure speech ("No electronic graphics; no talking cows; no actors pretending to be men in the street; no sunset walks along the beach").

The first suggestion was answered by the Supreme Court in *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976):

The First Amendment denies government the power to determine that spending to promote one's political views is wasteful, excessive, or unwise. In the free society ordained by our Constitution it is not the government, but the people—individually as citizens and candidates and collectively as associations and political committees—who must retain control over the quantity and range of debate on public issues in a political campaign.

It might be unseemly for our legislators to scramble for money and flood the airwaves with encomiums for themselves, but the remedy is an aroused public turning the scoundrels out of office. A flat ceiling on spending would not only limit the political debate that is at the heart of the First Amendment but also serve as an insurance policy for incumbents and make the race for office that much more difficult for outsiders. Perhaps unchallenged incumbents could be more statesmanlike and public-spirited than office-holders who fear defeat, but it is rather late in the day to replace Congress with a House of Lords. I suspect that the framers of the Constitution were willing to take the risk that incumbents might be defeated, rare as that event is in our day.

As to the second suggestion, one would be hard pressed to invent a more clearly unconstitutional proposal, as Easterbrook surmises by referring to *Buckley v. Valeo*. A regulation that so directly restricts the content of speech could never—and should never—pass constitutional muster. Easterbrook may propose to save from its own ignorance an electorate that is swayed by talking cows, but the First Amendment does not contemplate a paternalistic government telling its citizens what is and is not legitimate simile, metaphor, and imagery in political speech. Indeed, a talk-

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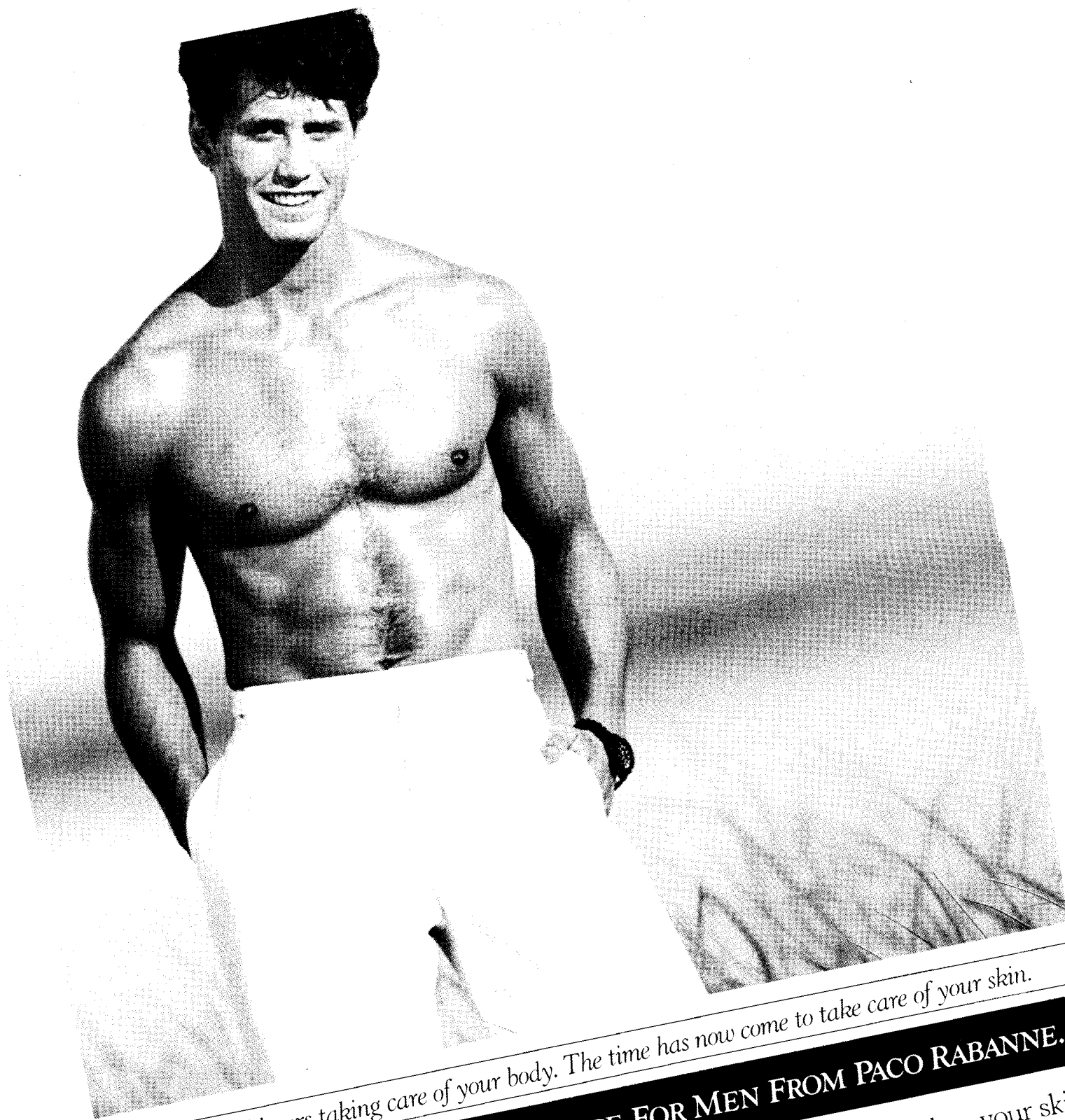
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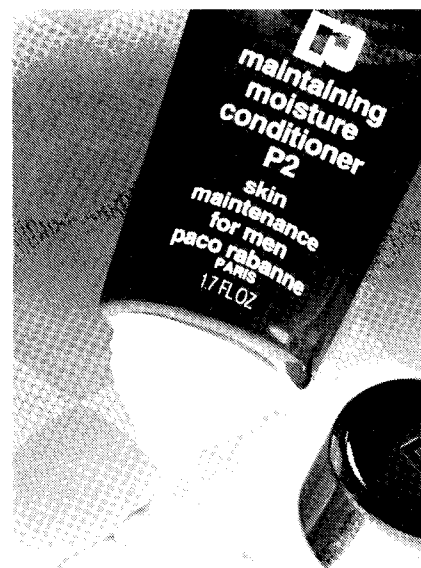
3. ENHANCE YOUR SKIN. Like most medical men, Dr. Aleu worries about the damage that too much sun can do to the skin. "A little sun is good for you. But a lot of sun can be murderous to your skin and eventually cause solar fibroelastosis (i.e., turn you into an old leather bag)."

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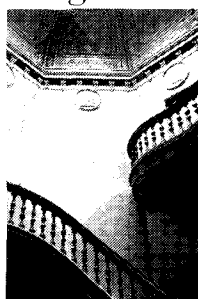
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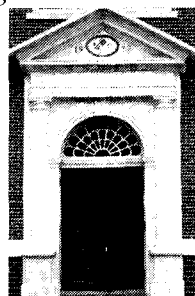
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ing cow that reminds voters of the large contributions received by Senator Doe from dairy PACs and Doe's subsequent vote to raise milk-price supports might be more eloquent than even the greatest of Great Communicators. This First Amendment right to use symbolism in getting attention and making a point was exercised by *The Atlantic* when it placed an illustration of a diapered infant, representing Congress, on its cover. I, for one, would extend free-speech rights to our legislators as well.

JEROME M. BALSAM
Oceanside, N.Y.

Gregg Easterbrook replies:

Professor Peabody is surely justified in suggesting that many needed reforms of Congress seem impossible. But so do most things really worth doing. If we confine our thinking to that which is easy to achieve, society will never advance. During the 1950s, reform of the congressional seniority system was widely considered "impossible"; today the fragmented-turf system seems equally impervious. But I believe that with leadership and vision committee chairmen could be induced to surrender their positions in the interest of an efficient national legislature. Whether Congress can apply this sort of forward-thinking discipline to itself is the key test of whether it can do the same for the country.

Does the First Amendment guarantee a right to lobby congressmen in the Capitol building itself? Dozens of public facilities, from security installations to the House and Senate floors, are off limits to the general public. Restrictions necessary for government to conduct its valid business generally receive constitutional sanction; last year the Supreme Court ruled in *Clark v. CCNV* that protesters could not camp in Lafayette Park, across from the White House, even though the park is public property and their purpose was to petition for redress of grievance. Any lobbyist who attempted to stand outside the Supreme Court chambers and badger justices about pending decisions would be regarded with horror and expelled—the same could, and should, apply to the Capitol.

Similarly, I think Mr. Balsam is wrong to cite present judicial rulings as though they were permanent. The Supreme Court (for good or ill) often alters its interpretations. Our Constitution made no reference to purchasing television time; the court created that "right" in its 1976 decision, in part because of objections to

the wording of early-1970s campaign-reform laws. Better laws might satisfy both the Constitution and the public interest.

MORE ON ARMS CONTROL

James Fallows's review of *Deadly Gambits* ("What Good Is Arms Control?" December *Atlantic*) contained all the eloquence and insight that *Atlantic* readers have come to expect of Mr. Fallows. But I was troubled by a line at the end of the review, in which, questioning the value of the arms-control process, he asked, "Would an arms-control treaty have stopped Hitler?"

This is a valid question. Are the Soviets a threat to peace and stability, as the Nazis so obviously were? This, I believe, is the central question of the U.S. defense debate. For if Fallows accepts the Podhoretzian notion that the Soviets are merely very patient Nazis, then the anti-arms-controllers, like Richard Perle, Caspar Weinberger, and Jesse Helms, are going to save us. But if the Soviets are not bent on world domination, then we may be arming ourselves into another pre-First World War situation, with an equally unstable super-power peace but immeasurably worse consequences of war.

In other words, the question is not would arms control have helped us with the Nazis but will it help us with the Russians. Strobe Talbott thinks it would. What does James Fallows think?

ERIC R. ALTERMAN
International Relations
Yale University
New Haven, Conn.

I would certainly agree with the last sentences of James Fallows's review, in which the recent failure of arms control is described as the symptom, not the cause, of superpower squabbling, and doubt is cast on the seriousness of our leaders about arms control.

However, some of the rest of the review implies that we should not expect much from arms control at all. I wish Mr. Fallows had made it clearer that arms control per se is not at fault and that great gains can be achieved from the creative pursuit of arms control, e.g. the increased stability resulting from a comprehensive test-ban treaty, a good START- or SALT-like treaty enforcing movement away from hard-target-capable ICBMs, a treaty against anti-satellite weapons, or a nuclear freeze. The fault

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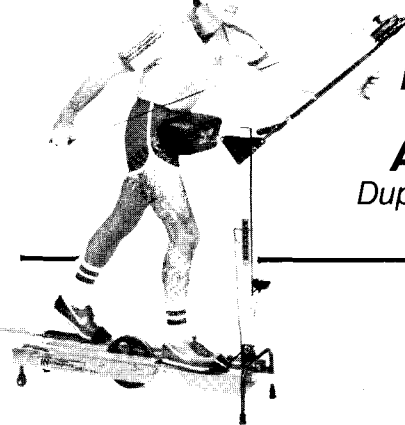


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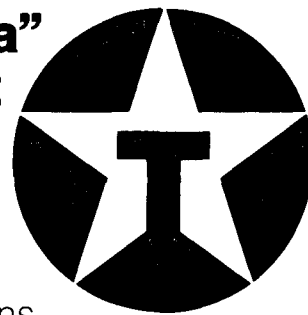
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these days, which Mr. Fallows admits but does not underscore heavily enough, is that timid, incompetent, unimaginative, malicious, or bureaucratic people in both superpower governments prevent arms control from achieving its true potential.

STEPHEN M. WHEELER
Washington, D.C.

James Fallows replies:

Are the Russians just like the Nazis? No. Should we try harder to live with them? Of course. Can arms control help? Yes, but . . . Yes, if . . . It is easy to think of arms-control measures that would make nuclear weapons "safer," in the sense that miscalculations might more easily be contained. The United States and the Soviet Union would both be better off if they got rid of their multiple-warhead missiles, which lead to "use it or lose it" thinking on the other side. One quiet little technical reform that could make an enormous difference is a ban on testing re-entry vehicles. These are the tests that lead to boasts about being able to target enemy positions with pinpoint accuracy. Without them there would be less loose talk about "hard-target kill capability," which is the necessary precondition to plans for a first strike.

The problem with any of these sane, sensible measures is that the two countries cannot agree on them. They have not been able to agree on much of importance in the past fifteen years, and the implied message of *Deadly Gambits* is that the areas of agreement are, if anything, shrinking. Does this amount to a failure of arms control? Yes, but that is not the right question: it amounts to a failure of diplomatic, historical, and political imagination by political leaders who don't see much urgency in learning to get along. To say that arms control will help solve our problems is like saying that a cease-fire will help solve the Iran-Iraq war. It couldn't hurt, but the real challenge is in creating the conditions that would permit it.

The primacy of politics is the reason that I can muster the greatest amount of personal enthusiasm for the arms-control measure with the least to be said for it technically: a nuclear freeze. As was amply pointed out during last year's presidential campaign, a freeze would be difficult to verify. Its significance is that, unlike a technical agreement about warhead size, it would be a powerful political expression, reflecting a desire for

reduced tensions between the superpowers. Wars are fought by generals and, these days, technicians, but rarely caused by them; the political climate is what will permit or prevent the next war.

BABY DOE

As a person born with myelomeningocele and now working toward a master's degree, I took great interest in Nat Hentoff's article "The Awful Privacy of Baby Doe" (January *Atlantic*).

Hentoff points out that when deciding whether to treat a severely disabled baby, parents who don't fully understand the baby's disability or realize its potential turn to their doctor, who will most likely tell them their baby will not lead a life worth living. After hearing that, many parents, unfortunately, feel that the only "loving" thing to do is to let the baby die.

However, no one, including doctors and parents, has the right to determine whether a person's life is worth living. Doctors are there only to preserve life, if possible. If the parents are unwilling or unable to pay for the baby's life-sustaining treatment, the government should step in. It's the only way to stop the needless and unwarranted murder of so many potentially productive adults.

GILES GHYLIN
Regan, N.D.

Nat Hentoff's Baby Doe article fails to explore one essential aspect of the dilemma society faces when a defective child is born: cost.

In spite of widespread understandable humanitarian (and legal) concern for the lives and rights of newborns, what will ultimately limit their protection is the willingness, or the ability, of society to foot the bill. It is one thing to incur an expense that can easily reach a million dollars in order to save and then provide a lifetime of care for a single defective child. It is quite another thing to guarantee the same treatment to every baby born.

ROBERT F. PEASE
East Sandwich, Mass.

Nat Hentoff replies:

If we start killing people because we can't afford them, where are we going to draw the line—and for how long? Consider how much money could be devoted to the care of the living if we insisted

that our arsenal of death, the military budget, be reduced to sane proportions.

VIETNAM VERSUS CAMBODIA

Stephen J. Morris asks, in "Vietnam's Vietnam" (January *Atlantic*), why the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia. The answer seems to be that Vietnamese (Soviet-made) tanks rolled into Cambodia because of a need to divert attention from domestic unrest, as well as because of the inherent imperialism of Vietnamese nationalism and the revolutionary ideology of Vietnamese communism. Mr. Morris suggests that to counteract this situation the United States should act or react in a quasi-military fashion so as to preserve vital American interests in the region. In pursuit of similarly ill-defined and inappropriate "interests" the United States became involved in the destruction and brutalization of Southeast Asia in the first place—a fact which seems not to interest Mr. Morris.

The Vietnamese went into Cambodia simply because they could. While the experience of Vietnam is remembered in this country by only a few, in Vietnam that experience must be a national obsession. After having suffered so much for so many years, the Vietnamese are ill equipped to exercise their newly won power with restraint. The move into Cambodia is only ostensibly political; it is primarily an emotional and psychological act of "release," of self-esteem, after years of incomparable violence at the hands of self-serving foreigners.

JACK MEYER
Green Bay, Wis.

Stephen J. Morris's article emphasized a point of view too infrequently expressed: that the United States should oppose Communist expansion for humanitarian reasons, among others. Marxist-Leninist revolutions in Russia, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba, and Southeast Asia—to mention the most outstanding examples—have all been accompanied by mass death and a variety of other social reforms only slightly less extreme. This is not mere chance. Such practices are inherent in Communist ideology, which, in its search for a "perfect" society, can justify the murder of any number of "imperfect" individuals. The individual cultures of these states, though diverse, make little difference. Add to communism's native brutality its native expansionism and the

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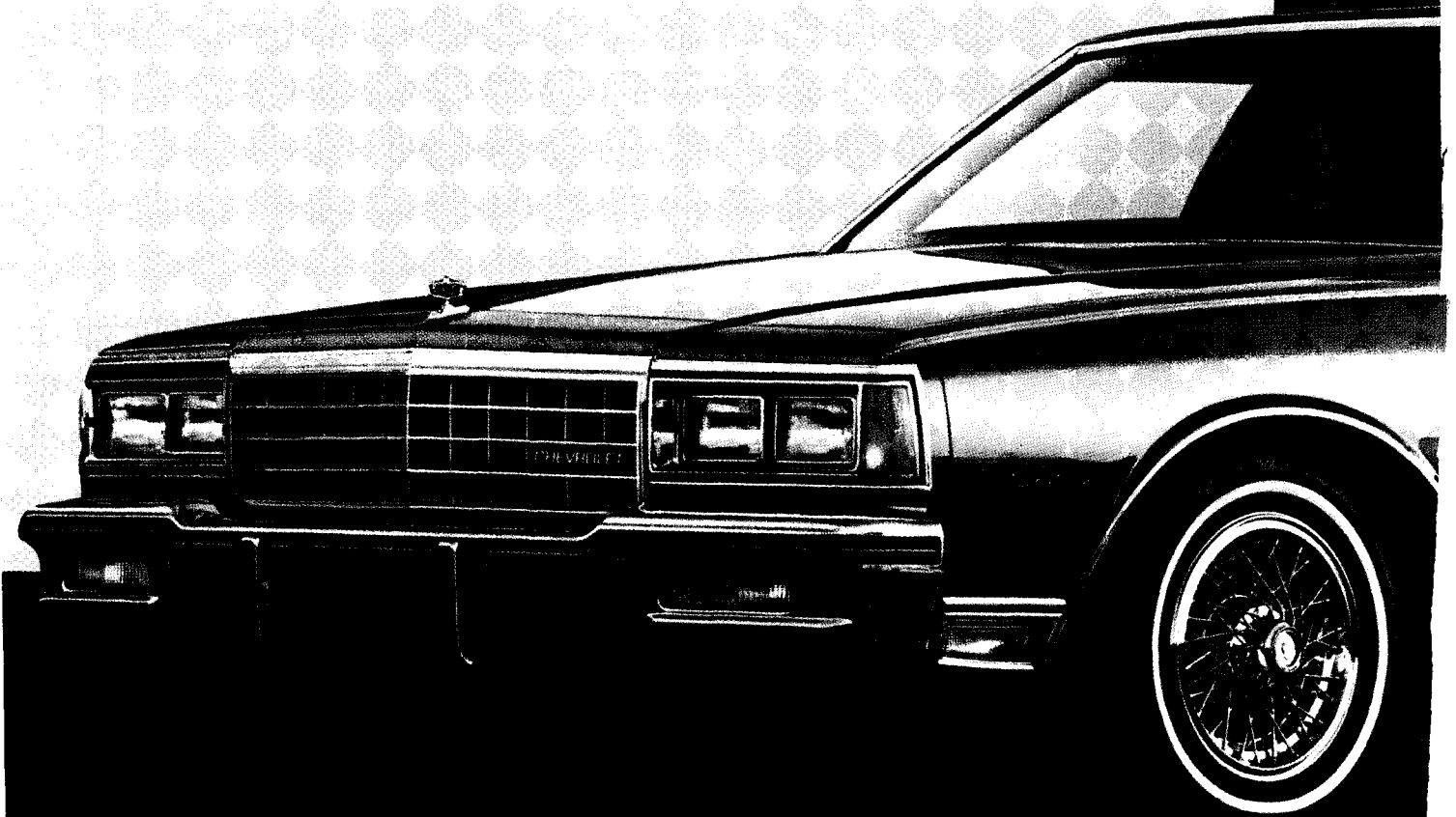
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TODAY'S CH

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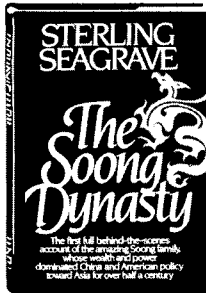


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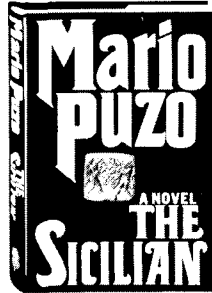
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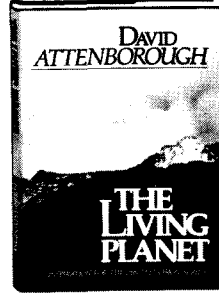
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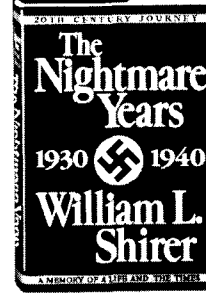
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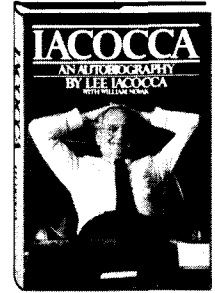
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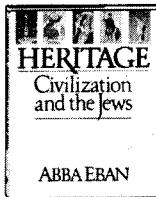
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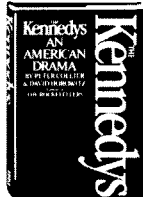
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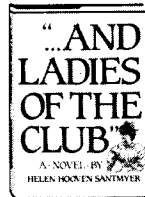
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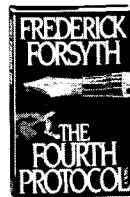
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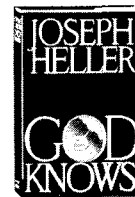
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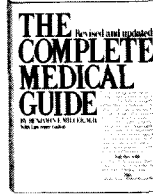
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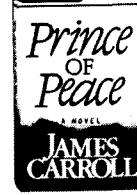
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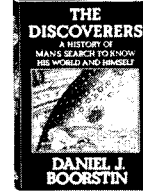
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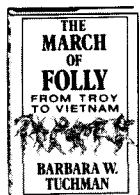
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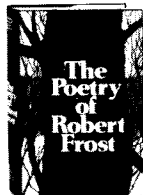
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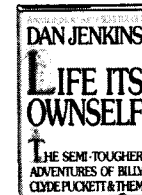
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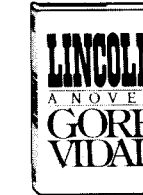
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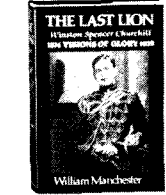
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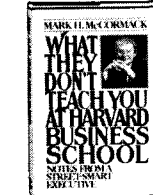
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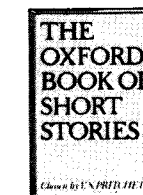
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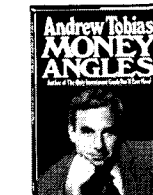
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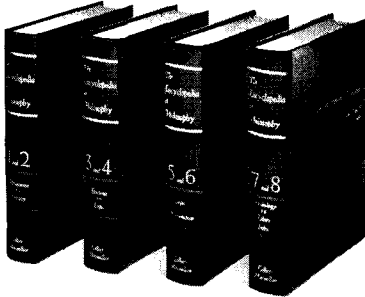
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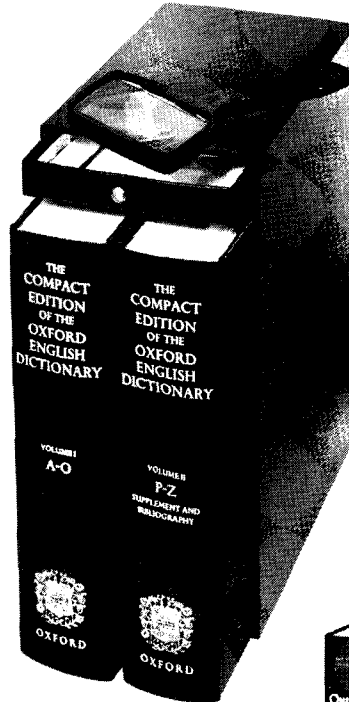
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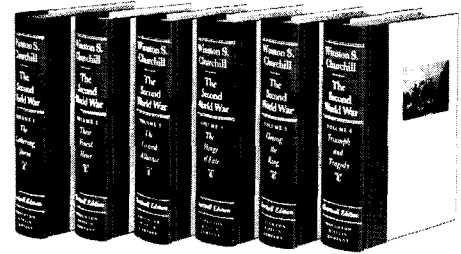


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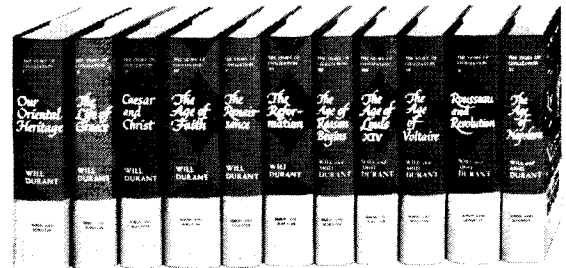
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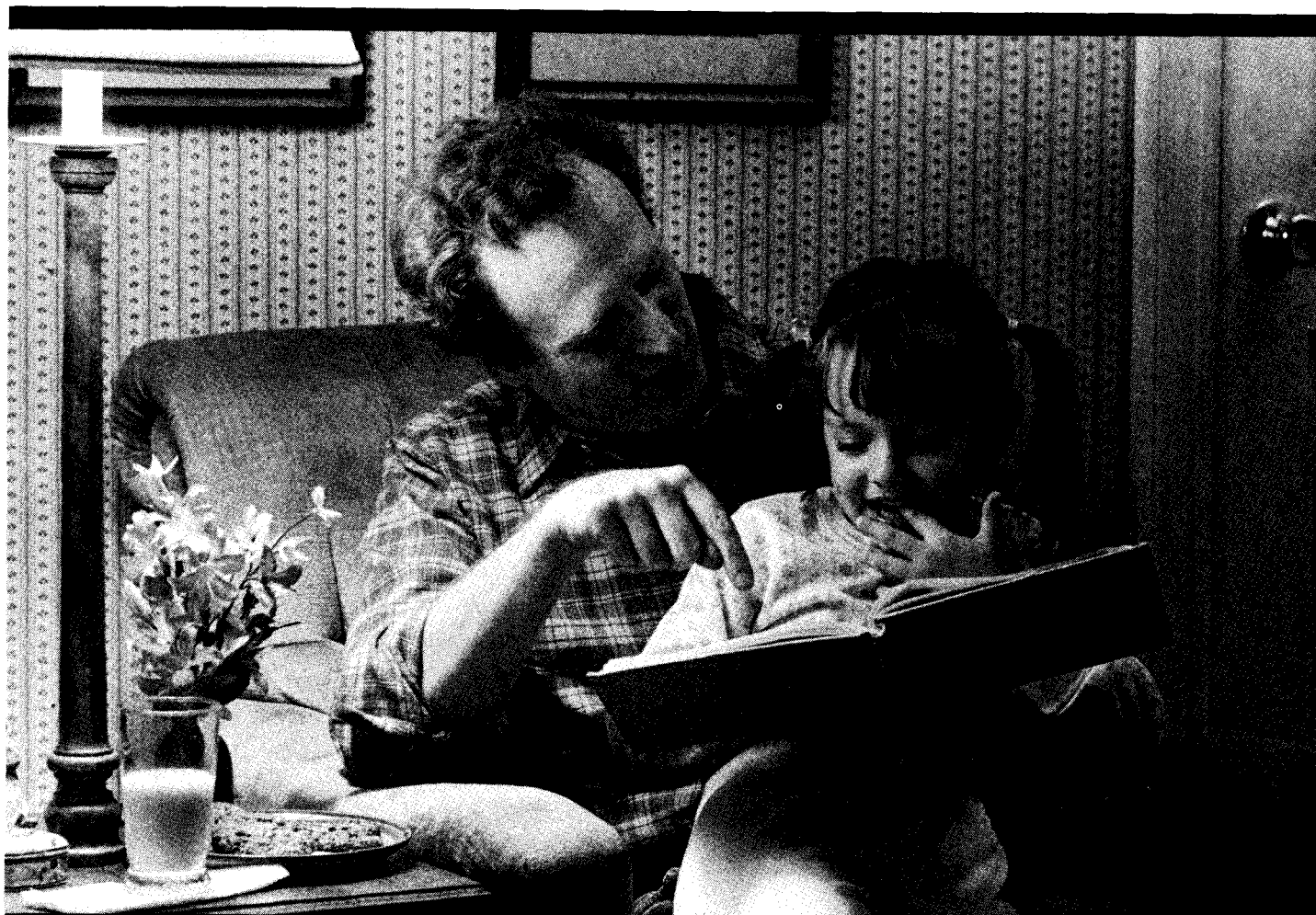
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historical nationalist expansionism of some of its adherents, and you have all the conditions for a spread of human misery beyond any ever known.

DAVID W. HARRISON
New York, N.Y.

Stephen Morris replies:

Jack Meyer reduces my argument for supporting the non-Communist Cambodians to the single justification of pursuit of American interests. He then bluntly asserts that these interests are ill defined and inappropriate without telling us why (although my article devoted some space to defining these interests and justifying the pursuit of them).

Mr. Meyer's explanation for the Vietnamese invasion is not only fanciful but also reeks of apology for the act (his denials notwithstanding). To talk of Vietnamese Communist expansionism as an emotional "release" in response to the violence of "self-serving foreigners" is to engage in a moral exculpation of the criminal-as-victim variety. But this time the criminal is a political caste rather than an individual, and its crimes include mass murder. Mr. Meyer's point of view is not new. The prototype of his kind of thinking is the 1930s theory that Stalinism in the USSR was a response to capitalist encirclement.

The Vietnamese Communists were acting out of a profound political commitment, which they acquired prior to experiencing the violence of foreigners. And their Communist political commitment was very different from the attitude of most of their countrymen, who experienced the same national history.

The Vietnamese Communists expressed profound animosity toward all other Vietnamese anti-colonial activists from the day Ho Chi Minh joined the French Communist Party, in 1920. Ho Chi Minh began his liquidation of rival Vietnamese nationalists in 1945, more than a year before the outbreak of war, and he enlisted the cooperation of the French military in some of his political killings. During the first years of the war against the French the Vietnamese Communists began liquidating members of their own ranks who showed signs of political independence.

The invasion of Cambodia is merely the latest manifestation of the impulse toward total political power that has driven the Vietnamese leaders at home and abroad since their adolescent days as members of socially privileged Vietnamese families. Why Communist revolu-

tionaries emerge from the ranks of the privileged and carry out the most enormous crimes in the name of "the people" is one of the great unanswered questions of our century. But historians will not be able to come up with an answer if, like Mr. Meyer, they are unable to acknowledge the preliminary propositions that Communist revolutionaries are motivated by the drive for power and the pursuit of ideological goals and that these motivations have preceded, not followed, the hostile actions of others.

ENDING DEFICITS

Roy Blount's article ("What You Personally Can Do About the Federal Deficit," December *Atlantic*) was enjoyable, but his facts are completely wrong. The U.S. Post Office is no longer a part of our government; it is run by an independent company, the United States Postal Service. Thus, throwing away a roll of stamps would have as much of an impact on the federal deficit as throwing away an airline ticket.

I have a better idea! How about having the government charge us ten cents for each tax form? Those who are well heeled and usually pay no taxes will have to pay something for the many forms they must fill out for their loopholes. And supplying tax forms wouldn't even be an expense to the government anymore; it would be a money-making process for the government.

ROBERT PUNG
Gardena, Calif.

Roy Blount, Jr., replies:

It's my proposal and I'm sticking with it. Why does no one ever pick Ronald Reagan's ideas apart like this? I'll tell you why: because Reagan owes everyone too much money.

SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE

My pleasure in your prominent review of my book *The Spirit of Enterprise* ("The Heroes of Capitalism," December *Atlantic*) was dimmed by a drastic error in Nicholas Lemann's reference to Milos Krofta. Lemann describes Krofta, incredibly, as a collaborator with the Nazis during the Second World War. Krofta narrowly escaped the Nazis with his life and lost all his property in the regions of Yugoslavia they controlled. His mother was captured and sent to Ausch-

witz. He was and is bitterly anti-Nazi and was deeply hurt by your characterization, which is made more damaging by your splendid reputation for balance and accuracy.

GEORGE GILDER
Tyringham, Mass.

Nicholas Lemann replies:

I did not use the word *collaborator* in my review. What I said was that in Gilder's book Krofta "operates his family's Yugoslavian paper mill for the Nazis during the Second World War." Here's the relevant passage:

Krofta's was a thankless managerial task, attempting to continue production in the heat of a many-sided conflict. But he embraced his conservative role with full fervor and resourcefulness. When Italy fell in 1943, the Germans took Vevce and carted away anyone not firmly employed. As one of the largest employers in the country, Krofta fought to preserve jobs. Preserving jobs, he was saving his workers from the camps. As a Yugoslav patriot, he was salvaging the industrial base of his country. If the mill stopped production, the occupying forces would dismantle it for war material. In a world of revolution and turmoil, he towered as a force of preservation.

To those who don't read this as I do, my apologies.

ADVICE & CONSENT

I was disappointed to read Cullen Murphy's "Comment" (December *Atlantic*) regarding Ms. Buxley of the *Beetle Bailey* comic strip. It is true that some feminists have gone too far, and it is also true that Walker pokes fun at more than office workers and old goats. But to place those who are sexually harassed in the same category as those who are "overweight, dumb, plain, drunk, and lazy" is a disservice to the individuals who must continually put up with still-prevalent male attitudes regarding women's place in the scheme of things.

AMY R. NAYLOR
Gardiner, Maine

I am writing to boast that I have solved every cryptic crossword puzzle that has appeared in your magazine—eighty-eight puzzles by my count. Can any other reader make this claim?

RONALD ARLEDGE
New York, N.Y.

Newsweek

Mon.

Tue.

Photograph by Robert Phillips

Thur.

Newsweek

Fri.

We'll stop at nothing to illuminate it.

The work week.

It's five days long. In the normal world.

But our world is news. And our week is far from normal.

The news week of Newsweek runs from Monday until Saturday

night when we put the magazine to bed. Except, we don't go to bed.

Because when a story breaks on Sunday, we have to be ready. We have to be ready to stop the presses. To turn on a dime. To take a major news event and piece it

together even as it is breaking.

Yet, unlike a newspaper, our long week gives us the advantage of not only being immediate, but reflective as well.

It affords Newsweek reporters the time to scratch for the story underneath the story. To depart from horse race journalism and

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Week

Newsweek

Wed.

Newsweek

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Sat.

arrive at analysis. To go beyond the simple facts to reveal the human issues. To tell people why.

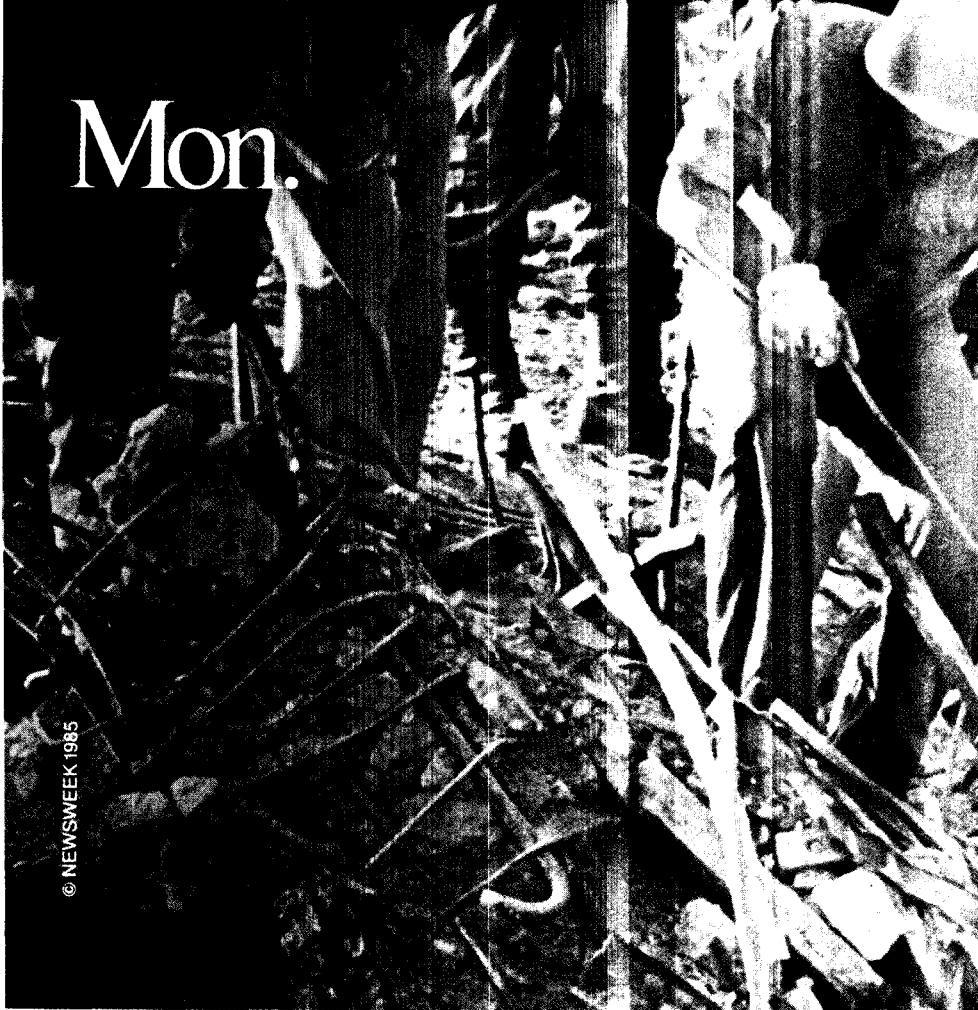
The lengths we'll go to do this are evident each week in Newsweek. When the government wouldn't let the press into Grenada, our photographer got into Grenada. When the presiden-

tial candidates began the campaign trail, it was our reporters who went the complete distance—by living with them for a full year.

Our weeks haven't gone unnoticed. In fact, Newsweek has won over 600 awards for excellence in journalism. More than any other newsweekly.

Which confirms what we've believed all along: when you work into all hours of the night, you eventually have your day.

Nobody gets you into the news like
Newsweek



Mon.

Tue.

© NEWSWEEK 1985

Thur.

Fri.

The week we had to write in a day.

Some weeks, it takes less than a week to write Newsweek. But not less effort.

The Marine massacre in Beirut was one of those weeks.

Normally, Saturday night is when we put our next week's issue to bed. But the Marine massacre in Lebanon early on

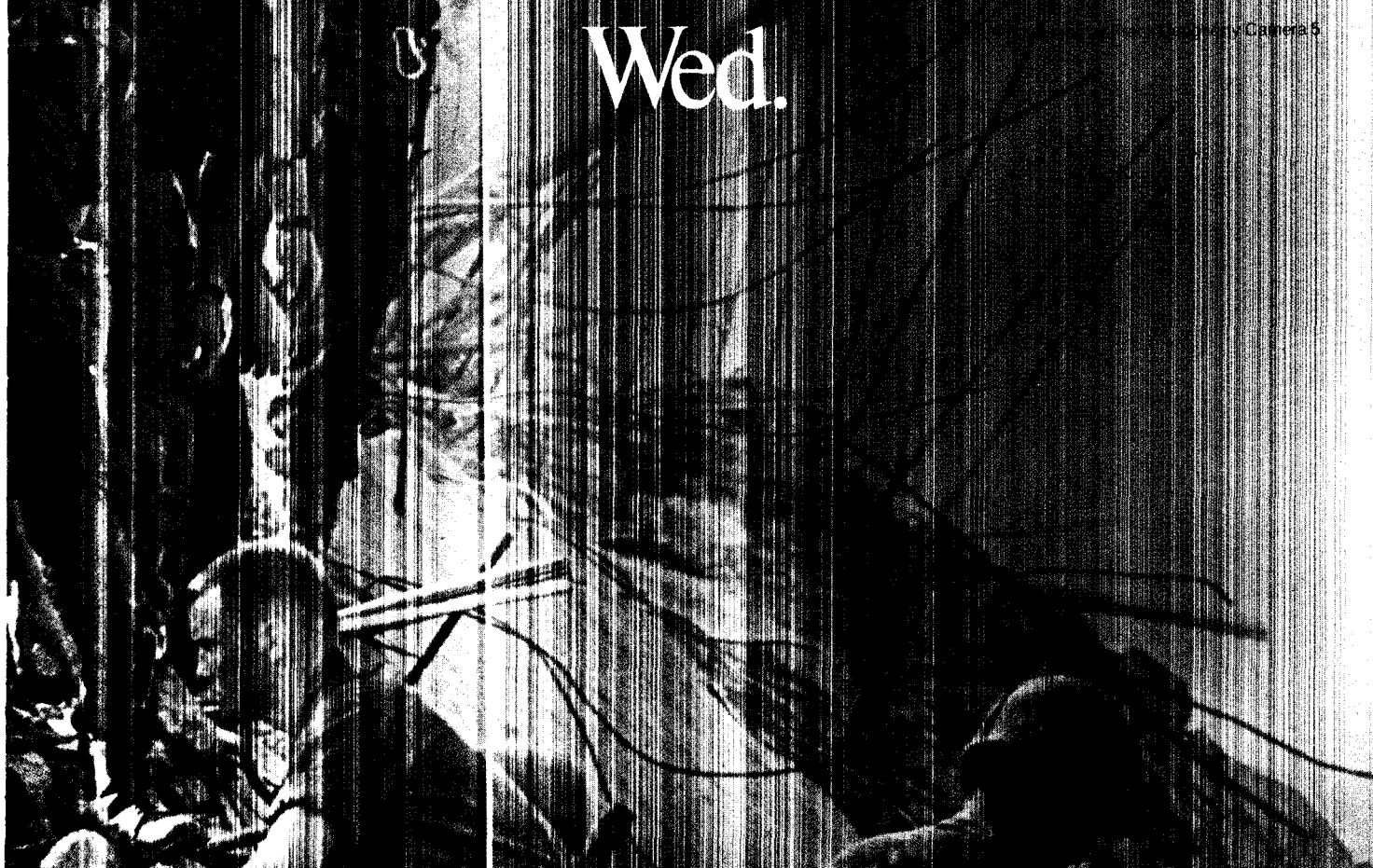
that Sunday morning was a rude awakening.

Minutes after the shock-waves had subsided, Newsweek assigned a team of reporters to the scene. Back at the magazine, we stopped the presses on our issue due on the newsstands the following day.

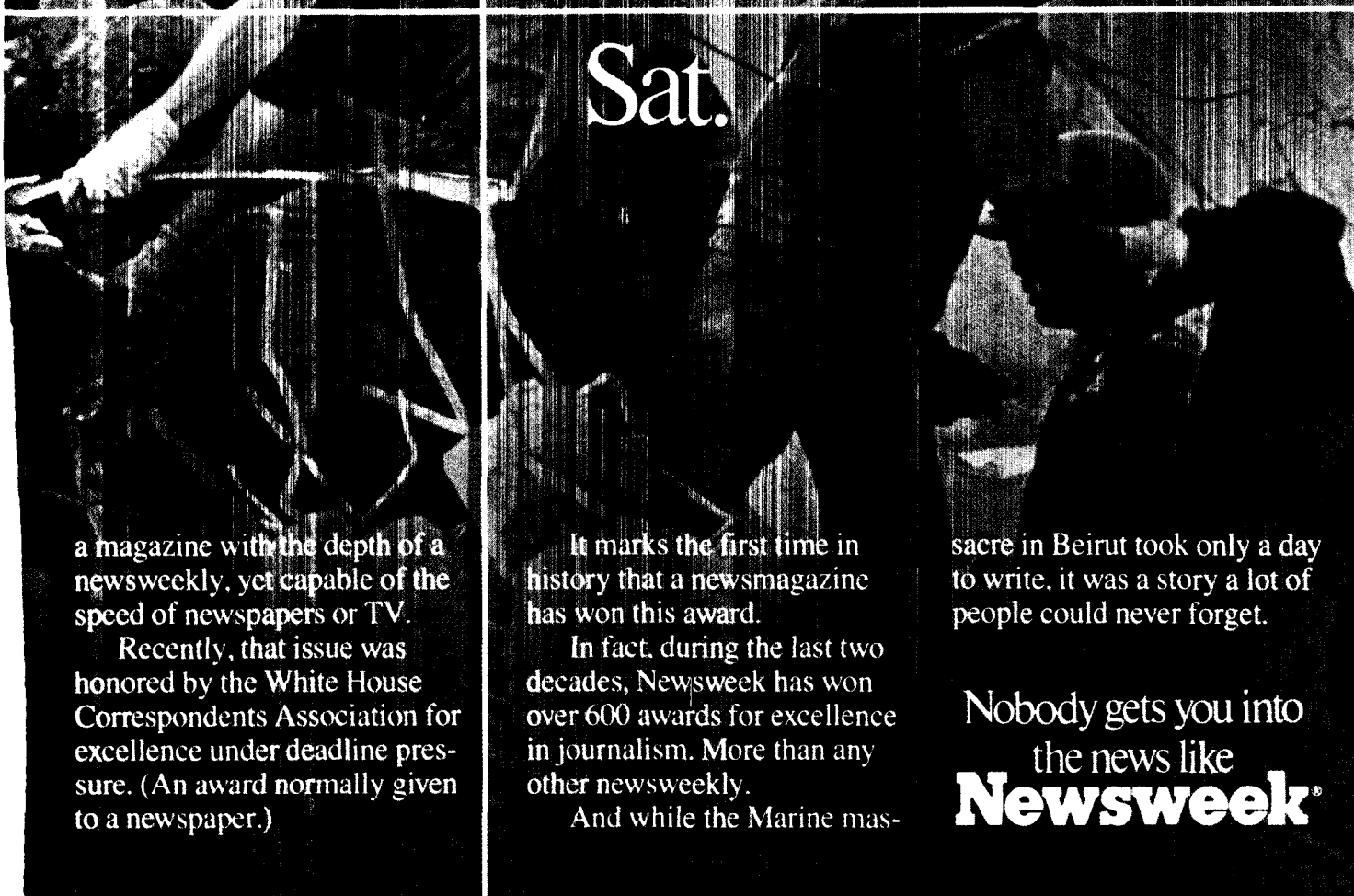
As the details of the tragedy became clear, we scrapped our cover story and wrote the story we wished we never had to write.

We were the only news-weekly to bring you that story the very next day.

It was Newsweek at its best:



Wed.



Sat.

a magazine with the depth of a newsworthy, yet capable of the speed of newspapers or TV.

Recently, that issue was honored by the White House Correspondents Association for excellence under deadline pressure. (An award normally given to a newspaper.)

It marks the first time in history that a newsmagazine has won this award.

In fact, during the last two decades, Newsweek has won over 600 awards for excellence in journalism. More than any other newsworthy.

And while the Marine mas-

sacre in Beirut took only a day to write, it was a story a lot of people could never forget.

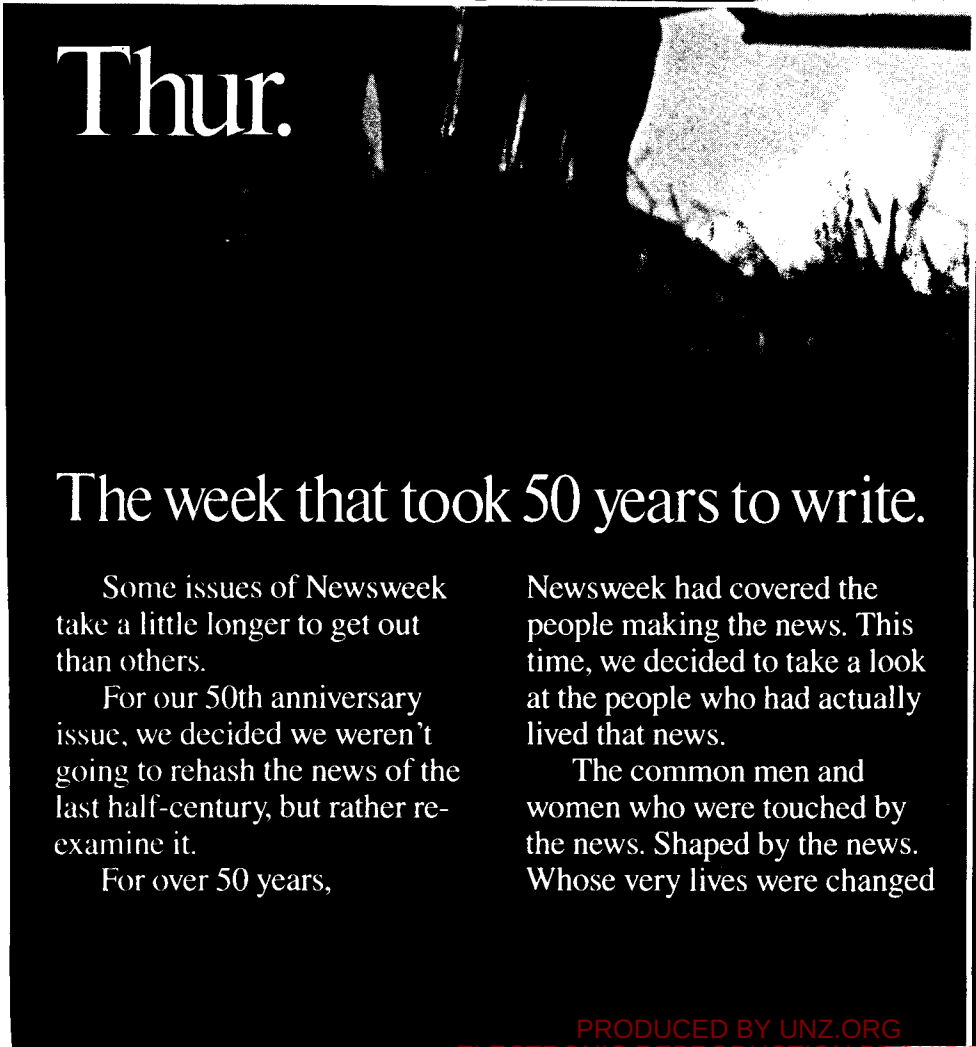
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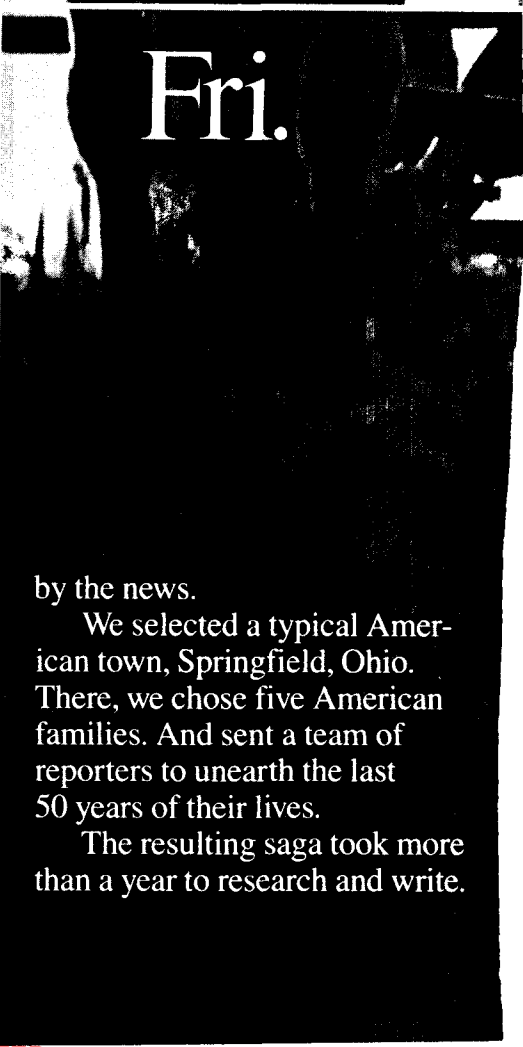
Mon.



Tue.



Thur.



Fri.

The week that took 50 years to write.

Some issues of Newsweek take a little longer to get out than others.

For our 50th anniversary issue, we decided we weren't going to rehash the news of the last half-century, but rather re-examine it.

For over 50 years,

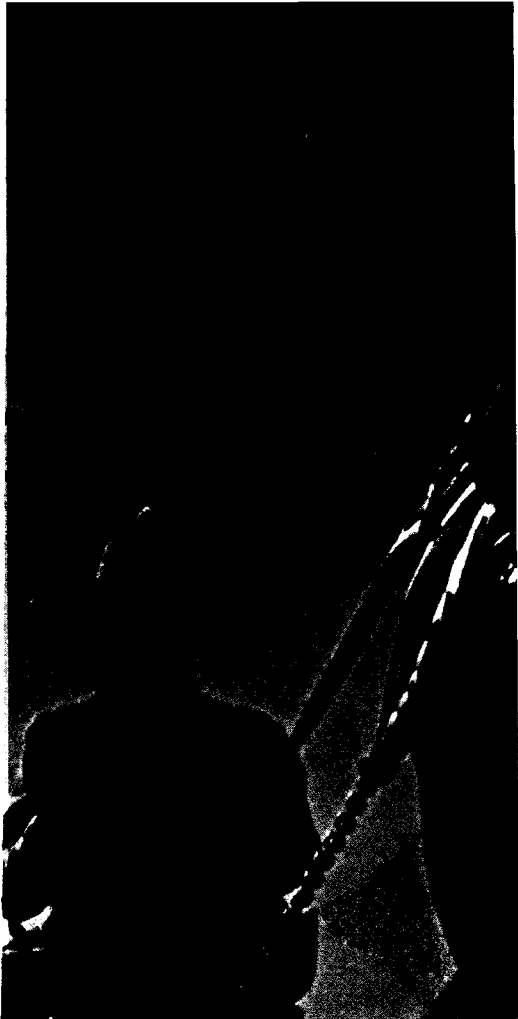
Newsweek had covered the people making the news. This time, we decided to take a look at the people who had actually lived that news.

The common men and women who were touched by the news. Shaped by the news. Whose very lives were changed

by the news.

We selected a typical American town, Springfield, Ohio. There, we chose five American families. And sent a team of reporters to unearth the last 50 years of their lives.

The resulting saga took more than a year to research and write.



Wed.



Sat.

It was Newsweek at its best: in-depth, insightful, in perspective.

That issue was honored by the American Society of Magazine Editors last year when it was chosen as a finalist in the National Magazine Awards.

The National Magazine Awards are the highest honor

an American magazine can receive. To date, Newsweek has captured more of them than any other newsweekly.

In fact, during the last two decades, Newsweek has won over 600 awards for excellence in journalism. More than any other newsweekly.

Which goes to prove one thing: when you spend 50 years writing the news like no one else does, you can receive some nice news, yourself.

Nobody gets you into
the news like
Newsweek

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REPORTS & COMMENT

CAMPAIGNS SERVING TV WINNERS

American political consultants are using polished media techniques to help foreign candidates win elections

AS GARY HART was emerging on the political scene here, a year ago, a similar phenomenon was occurring in, of all places, Panama. Last February the little-known Nicolás Ardito Barletta Vallarina, who had never before sought elective office, returned home to Panama City after more than six years in the United States as a vice president of the World Bank. Following a carefully orchestrated three-month campaign in which Barletta, age forty-five, cast the election as a choice between a new voice for the future and a has-been, he narrowly defeated eighty-three-year-old three-time former president Arnulfo Arias Madrid.

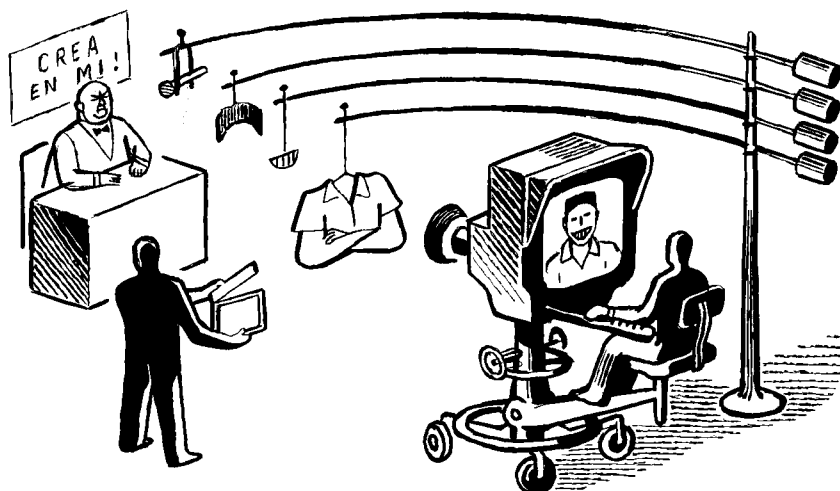
If the scenario and Barletta's campaign theme of "new leadership" sound familiar to American voters, it is no coincidence. His campaign, like an increasing number of foreign campaigns, was orchestrated by the same people who mastermind our political races: American political consultants. Barletta's campaign was planned by D. H. Sawyer & Associates, a New York firm that in 1984 handled John Glenn's race for President and the former governor Jim Hunt's unsuccessful campaign to unseat Senator Jesse Helms, in North Carolina. In the past two years alone American political consultants have played major roles in elections in Israel, Venezuela, and Nigeria, as well as Panama. In Israel's 1981

election there were American consultants on *both* sides: Sawyer handled the Labour Party, while David Garth, also of New York, handled the Likud opposition. Joel McCleary, Sawyer's chief of international operations, the treasurer of the Democratic Party, and a former aide to President Carter, says, "There are few elections anymore in which American political consultants aren't involved in some way." This may be an exaggeration, but clearly the influence abroad of these consultants is growing. Their role is often unpublicized, since news of American involvement could have negative effects for their clients. But these consultants are quietly fulfilling the age-old dream of exporting American democracy to the world. Unfortunately, no one is asking whether our media politics of polls, television commercials, and "new ideas" is what the world wants or needs—not that it has much choice in the matter.

What makes it all possible is television and the political culture it creates. The television show *Dallas* is nearly as popular in Israel as it is here. McCleary was shocked on his first visit to the jun-

gles of Panama to discover antennas on many of the thatched huts. "Everywhere you go you see the same things—the decline of political parties because of television, the same demographic and economic changes," he says. "Today, because of television, what happens in Panama is not all that different from what happens in Paris, Bogotá, or New York." In those few countries where television is not a powerful force, consultants improvise. In the late sixties the well-known consultant Joseph Napolitan orchestrated Ferdinand Marcos's media campaign in the Philippines by securing fifteen flatbed trucks and driving them around the country with a screen and a projector. Every night his operatives would show Marcos commercials for two hours to an enthralled populace that had gathered in the middle of a village.

Of course each country is different. In Israel and France the parties are given television time slots; when Napolitan worked with Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, in 1974, France allowed no filmed television commercials and only permitted



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candidates to appear in their allotted slots with a glass of water, the French flag, and a vase of flowers. In some countries, including Panama, outdoor rallies are very important. Venezuela is known for its campaign posters, Britain for its sophisticated print advertisements, and Nigeria for its catchy campaign jingles (the songs are often sung from tribe to tribe). State-controlled television obviously makes it harder for a challenger to acquire enough media time to become well known, and in a parliamentary system tactics change: a political consultant usually has less freedom to elevate an unknown to power, because the party structure and hierarchy are stronger.

But in the age of television the similarities among countries outweigh the differences. "Because of television, there is one universal in all elections now," the pollster Dick Dresner, of New York, says. "If you have an unknown candidate with the right characteristics, you have a powerful force." McCleary says, "What television has done is give everyone equal access to information. The traditional bosses can no longer control the process."

Instead, it is controlled by consultants who understand television. "What we bring is a technical expertise—making commercials, calling press conferences, testing what the reaction is to issues and how to verbalize it," David Garth says. Napolitan, a founder, in 1968, of the International Association of Political Consultants, says, "We know how to read polls. The best political polling is done by American-trained pollsters, who know the right questions to ask and tend to interview fewer people in more depth. We essentially do technical things."

Perhaps. But those "technical things" can influence an election. No consultant admits to ever having been asked by the United States government to handle a foreign campaign (all say they would turn such a request down). Nonetheless, the Central Intelligence Agency could do a lot worse than to hire David Garth or Joe Napolitan the next time it wants to favor a particular side in a foreign election. The 1984 Panamanian election is a good example of just how influential American political consultants have become in foreign campaigns.

IT BEGAN WHEN the heads of Panama's ruling party, the People's Revolutionary Democracy (PRD), sought advice from Hamilton Jordan, formerly Presi-

dent Carter's chief of staff. During negotiations over the Panama Canal Treaty, Jordan had become friendly with General Omar Torrijos Herrera, the leader of Panama. Torrijos, who had seized power in a 1968 military coup and then abolished presidential elections for sixteen years, was expected to run for president in 1984. But he was killed in a plane crash in 1981, and the PRD and the country went through a succession of leaders over the next three years.

The PRD—backed by the military—faced a difficult task in the 1984 race. Because the last years of the Torrijos regime had been rife with scandals, the PRD would have to run against fear of the military and a strong sentiment in favor of change, as well as the popular Arias, the candidate of the opposition coalition and perhaps the last of the old charismatic Latin American political leaders. A doctor who was first elected president in 1940, Arias had a complex past. On the one hand, Panamanians revered him for starting the nation's social-security system and giving women the vote. On the other hand, Arias had tried to deprive blacks of citizenship in the forties and had flirted with the Nazis during the Second World War. Elected three times, he was overthrown by the military each time, the last in 1968, by Torrijos, after only eleven days in office.

Jordan suggested that the PRD leaders get in touch with his friend Joel McCleary, who had gone to work for D. H. Sawyer & Associates in 1981.

WHEN MCCLEARY first went to Panama to meet with the party leaders, they had an unusual request: could he help them find a little-known candidate, unconnected with the military and untainted by the government scandals, and then get him elected over Arias? The PRD had already begun to focus on Barletta, formerly cabinet officer under Torrijos, who had left for his job at the World Bank before the story of the scandals began to emerge. But the party leaders were worried. Was Barletta too unknown, too elite, too removed from the people? Would his World Bank experience and the fact that all his children attended schools in the United States be negatives too strong to overcome?

Like most consultants, McCleary began his work by commissioning a poll, this one from Dick Dresner. Dresner had never been to Panama and knew little about it. But that hardly mattered. "I

gave myself a crash course in the country, and I met with all the key leaders," he says. "In the space of a week I found out as much about their politics as they know, and I got a fresh approach." Dresner also learned of two factors that would make his task easier: Panama had recently completed an excellent census, and more than two thirds of the country had daily access to television. The race was on.

Using the census data, Dresner designed a series of polls that included more than 500 questions, testing everything from the characteristics of the candidates to attitudes toward major social institutions. He found that the most popular figures in Panama were Torrijos and the junior middleweight boxing champion Roberto Duran (a non-candidate) and that the key issues were unemployment and the high cost of living. Dresner tested programs in minute detail: for example, he found that by a margin of 72 percent people would be likely to vote for a candidate who promised to make business pay its *fair share* of taxes, although a simple promise that business would pay *more* taxes would produce negative results by a margin of 36 percent. Dresner found that despite the recent scandals government corruption did not seem to be a preoccupation of Panamanian voters, because few believed that any leader could stop it. Voters even said that they would *reject* a candidate who promised not to hire or otherwise favor his relatives if elected. If the system is corrupt and can't be changed, the reasoning went, the least you can do is help your family.

At the end of December, 1983, Dresner presented his findings to McCleary. As McCleary would later explain to the PRD, they included the following analyses:

—The voters feel anyone who serves as President of Panama must have the political skills to deal effectively with the National Guard, the banks, the Americans, the Communists and the political parties. For this reason, they are looking for someone who is an experienced professional. Non-politicians and new fresh faces don't go very far in Panama. The electorate wants somebody who is tough.

—Arnulfo Arias is highly vulnerable. His popularity is limited, his vote getting ability is limited, his age is a major strike against him and he is seen as Panama's past and not its future. On the other hand, Arias is seen as tough and effective and people are

aware of his accomplishments (social security, a woman's right to vote) and while they are aware of his negatives, including his age and [persecution] of Jews and Blacks, they have pretty much forgiven him.

—Of the candidates we tested, Nicolás Ardito Barletta is our best choice. . . . He is seen as a bit more honest, more in touch with people and closer to [the late] General Torrijos.

Armed with this material, McCleary made his recommendations to the PRD, in a 100-page strategy memo. McCleary explained that Arias's strength persisted for two reasons: "there is no exciting alternative" and "people in Panama expect politicians to have done things they dislike intensely. It is a price they are willing to pay for effectiveness." However, he went on, an "unknown" could beat Arias, and Barletta was the best unknown available. He wrote:

For Barletta, [personal] campaigning is crucial and a quick start in that direction is essential. Given communication patterns in the country, his [personal] activity is more important in the countryside than it is in the city. Barletta has a lot of popular accomplishments. If he establishes a personal link with the people and educates them, he will impact on this election quickly and dramatically.

McCleary also told the PRD that its candidate needed to avoid being cast as the incumbent. If Barletta could not be persuaded to run, McCleary advised, the party should find someone "who came from a poor background, had managed to put himself through college in Panama, had worked in politics under Torrijos and had made himself successful in business since then." As it turned out, Barletta needed little persuading.

McCleary's proposed campaign strategy was specific: Barletta needed to run Panama's first extensive media campaign, with an advertising budget of around \$750,000. McCleary even suggested that the competent but colorless Barletta attend a "video workshop" for training in the nuances of television. McCleary outlined the television images: "We want our candidate to be seen as a man of the people, driving around in a car with a single aide, passing out literature and shaking hands in the factories and in the small towns," he wrote. He also suggested two other innovations: Panama's first direct-mail campaign, to reach 200,000 households in

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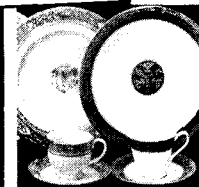
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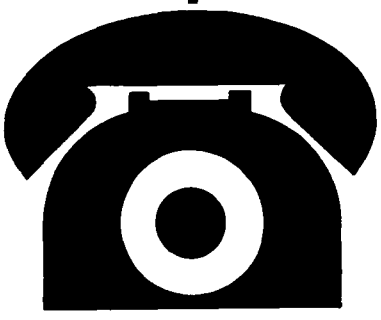
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the weeks before the election, and a series of advertisements against Arias, also a first in Panamanian politics. Cost of the operation, including production expenses? Well over a million dollars—a small media budget by American standards, but unheard of in Panama. And where would the money come from? McCleary says, "You don't ask."

ONCE THE PRD had approved the plan, Sawyer & Associates made a check on the Panamanian attitudes revealed by Dresner's polls. In foreign elections voters frequently lie to pollsters, because of fear of the government or the military. So to verify Dresner's results McCleary retained the services of the consultant Ned Kennan, a pioneer in the use of "focus group" polling techniques. Kennan, a former Israeli intelligence agent now living in New York, determines political attitudes by running series of workshops that resemble group-therapy sessions, in which small groups of voters talk for several hours about their feelings. His methods are like those of other intelligence-gathering networks: an "agent" is thoroughly briefed and then sent to the country to run the workshops and gather data. Once back in this country, the agent spends several days with Kennan in intense debriefing sessions.

By and large Kennan's findings corroborated Dresner's, though some important discoveries were made. For example, Kennan found that Barletta's experience with the World Bank created a positive, not a negative, image with the electorate. The voters saw Barletta as smart (to have held such a high position), less corrupt than other candidates ("He knows how much he can steal"), and likely to be instrumental in dealing with the national debt ("If anyone can get us out of the hole, he is the one!"). Kennan's sample gave Barletta a better chance of winning than the polls did, for, as one voter explained, "Otherwise he would not have left his important position with the World Bank."

McCleary and Dresner then helped the PRD to implement its tightrope strategy of depicting Barletta as an experienced outsider. The slogan was a simple one: "Nicolás Barletta: *Panamá lo necesita*" (Panama needs him). McCleary recruited three former colleagues from the Carter campaign to run the field operations, including Tim Kraft, a onetime Peace Corps volunteer in Guatemala, who had engineered Carter's

successful Iowa caucus upset in 1976. "For three months I spent two weeks out of every month in Panama," McCleary recalls. "It was very much like an American campaign. Every morning we had a staff meeting where we set the day's strategy—the story we wanted to get out in the press that day, the schedule, the operations of the campaign."

For a relative unknown like Barletta television commercials were the key to the campaign. Not surprisingly, given McCleary's experience with Carter, the ads—in Spanish and from thirty seconds to two minutes long—bore a certain resemblance to the ads in Carter's 1976 campaign. The banker Nicolás Barletta became "Nicky" Barletta, often wearing an open shirt and a baseball cap. Three kinds of ads, all familiar to American voters, were used. First were the "man in the street" ads, in which Panamanians from all walks of life talked about why they liked Barletta. In one, "*El cambio verdadero*" (True Change), Panamanians spoke of how Barletta would cut unemployment, increase the standard of living, and build more housing—all issues identified by Dresner's polls.

A second series of ads showed Barletta discussing the election informally with a group of voters. In "*Crea en mí*" (Believe in Me) Barletta sounded like a Carter clone when he told voters, "I share your feelings, because I believe in you. I believe in your pain and in your emotion and the pain of everyone else here. . . . I have an ideal, as you all do, and that's what I'd like to fight for."

Finally there were the ads that attacked Arias. In one spot Barletta contrasted his housing program with that of Arias, who had once derided the need for a housing program, saying that all a person needs is "two sticks and a grass hut." In another ad the Sawyer group focused attention on Arias's running mate, a former Miami banker who spoke with a foreign accent. "Keep your eye on the vice-president," intoned the announcer, as an eye (the symbol of danger) appeared on screen. "It was a bit ironic, given the background of our candidate," McCleary says. "But it was effective."

The opposition ran a traditional campaign, with television ads that rarely featured its candidate but instead showed crowds at emotional rallies. Barletta challenged Arias to a televised debate—a challenge that Arias ignored. A third major candidate, Ruben Dario Paredes, the former head of the National Guard, rapidly lost strength.

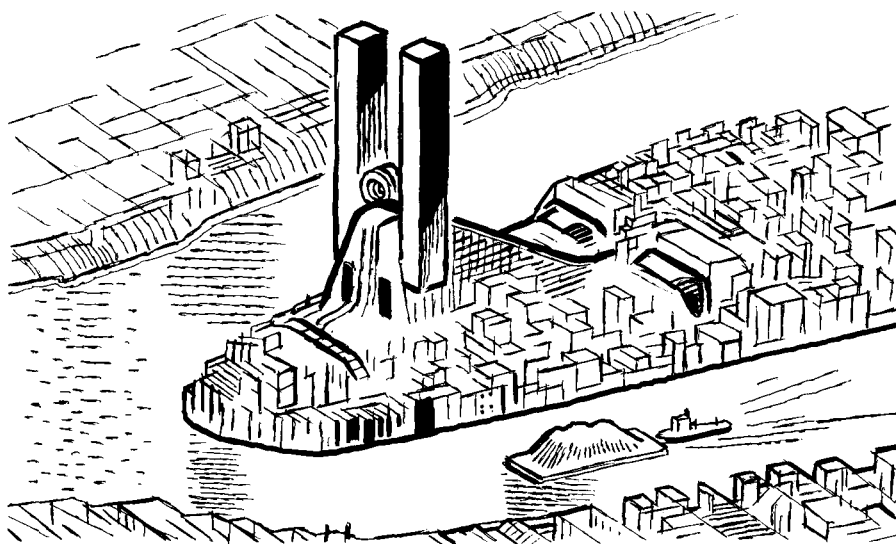
On May 6 Panama voted. It took ten days to count the votes, and during that period there were minor riots and threats that if Arias won a fourth time the military would again overthrow him. On May 16 it was announced that Barletta had won, by fewer than two thousand votes: 300,748 to 299,035. Barletta's backers were ecstatic, but the Sawyer crew were more wary. They remembered how similar efforts in Nigeria in 1983 had produced a 4.2-million-vote victory for President Alhaji Shehu Shagari, who was promptly overthrown in a military coup. "In that case we won the

battle but lost the war," McCleary says.

One other note: The former ambassador William Jordan had gone to Panama at the invitation of the government to observe the election. When it was all over and Panamanian politics had entered the media age, Jordan had nothing but praise for what he had seen. He told a reporter that he had witnessed "a magnificent political process" and "a demonstration of democracy."

—Steven Stark

Steven Stark, who lives in Boston, writes frequently about politics and popular culture.



NEW YORK

WHERE WILL ALL THE GARBAGE GO?

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THE LARGEST LANDFILL in the world sprawls over 3,000 acres at Fresh Kills, on Staten Island. It is an awesome sight: a sharply corrugated expanse of earth-covered berms built exclusively of compacted waste, a surreal procession of garbage hills and garbage dales and glittering garbage plains where bulldozers scuttle about like oversized scavenger beetles, towing trolleys full of trash. Fresh Kills is almost unimaginably big—big enough, in the conventional measure of large American spaces, to swallow some 2,000 football fields. Its summit, which towers several hundred feet

above sea level, is still rising; 11,000 tons of new garbage arrive every day. Of the approximately 24,000 tons of household and commercial refuse collected daily by the city, better than three quarters winds up in New York's three remaining landfills. One of these accepts only a fraction of the total, and another, at Fountain Avenue in Brooklyn, is scheduled to close in December, when, by arrangement with the Department of the Interior, it will be incorporated into the adjoining Gateway National Recreation Area. For all practical purposes, that will leave only Fresh Kills.

Paul Casowitz, the deputy commissioner for resource-recovery and waste-disposal planning at the New York City Department of Sanitation, has the unenviable assignment of figuring out what to do with all the garbage. The prospect of sending 20,000 tons a day to Staten Island is disquieting, but at present Casowitz has few other options. New York's existing waste-disposal facilities are quite literally exhausted. The city's landfills are either filled or filling fast, and its network of incinerators and han-

dling facilities has been obsolete for some time. Additional landfill space is almost impossible to find, and proposals for high-efficiency incinerators have until recently been mired in the inertia of municipal politics. The city's request to the Department of the Interior for an extension of its deadline was turned down. Landfills, Casowitz remarks hopefully, are like soft luggage: you can always stuff a bit more in. He estimates that using the best available technology he may be able to push Fresh Kills's plateau up to 500 feet, but even the most optimistic analyses suggest that the site will be brim full in twelve to fifteen years. And that will leave no dumping grounds at all. Near the landfill's main entrance, where trucks queue up and sea gulls hover overhead, I found an eerily prophetic sign: DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION, NO DUMPING HERE.

The magnitude of New York's dilemma may be exceptional but the general problem itself is not: though reliable nationwide numbers are hard to come by, cities everywhere seem to be running out of places to put their garbage. "There's no way you're going to get hard figures," says Ronald Musselwhite, who studies the subject for the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "Nobody's even sure how many landfills there are, never mind how much capacity is left. But when enough cities say they have a local problem, you can safely assume the problem is national as well." The extent of the problem is all the harder to measure because municipal solid waste is typically disposed of by a combination of public and private means. And solid waste is considered a purely local concern, whereas sewage, for instance, gets attention from state and federal authorities.

The problem is most keenly felt in older northeastern and central cities, like New York, Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago—densely populated places where the suburban fringe is thickly settled and space is at a premium. In the Southwest and the West open land is cheaper and more plentiful, but landfills are nowhere very popular. Outlying communities, aware of the perils of toxic dumping, are determined to resist dumps of any kind, so municipalities have been forced to expand on sites they already have. Disposal is thus becoming ever more centralized, and the greater the distance between the point of collection and the point of final disposal, the higher the cost. Landfill de-

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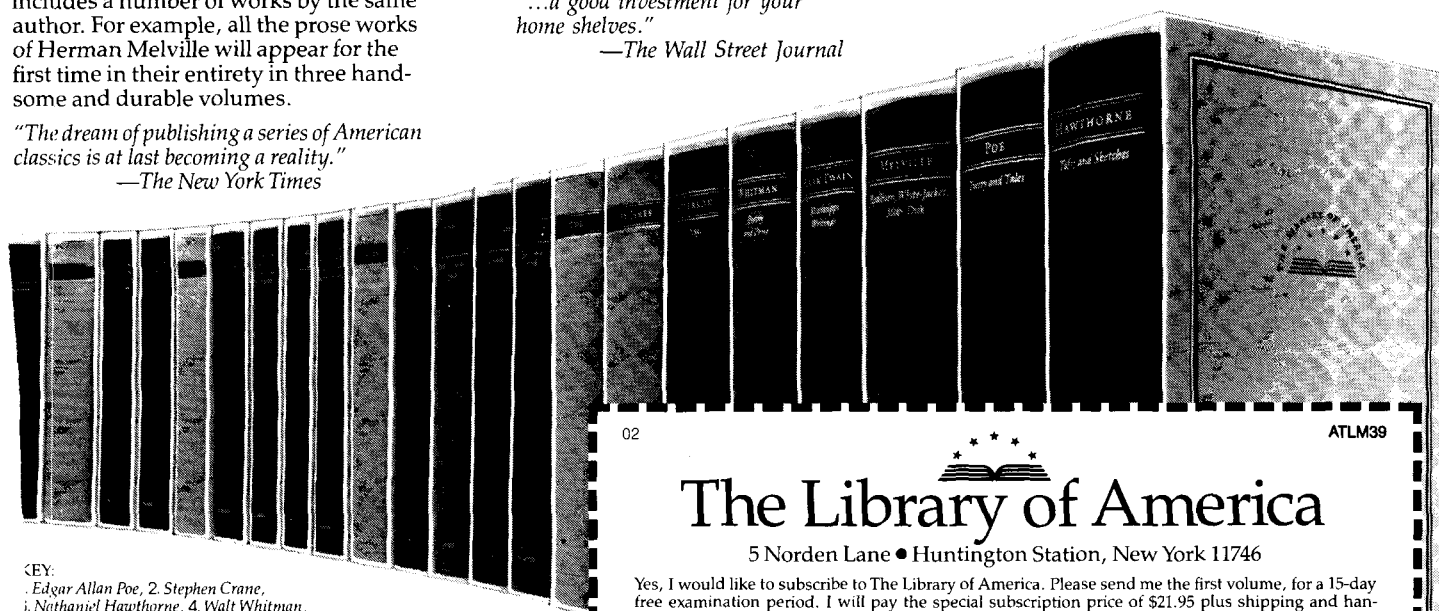
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pletion is not widely discussed in the press, but it is a hot topic among mayors and city managers. The seriousness of the situation is perhaps best indicated by the number of U.S. cities now pursuing waste-disposal alternatives—roughly 200, from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to Rutland, Vermont.

From the late nineteenth century until the start of the Second World War, New York, like most American cities, maintained a diverse and decentralized waste-disposal system consisting mainly of small incinerators and landfills. Many of the incinerators were abandoned when they came to the end of their useful life and were never replaced, leaving landfills to take up the slack. Planners acknowledged that landfill capacity would eventually be exhausted but saw no immediate reason for concern. As additional incinerators were retired and smaller landfills closed, the system contracted. New York in 1934 counted twenty-two working incinerators and eighty-nine landfills. In 1984 only three of each remained.

Ultimately, Paul Casowitz explains, virtually all garbage is disposed of in landfills. Bulk can be reduced by baling, burning, shredding, or other, more exotic techniques, but while these extend the life of a landfill, they do not obviate the need for one. Contrary to popular belief, ocean dumping off New York no longer occurs, and it hasn't occurred since 1934. The heavily laden barges that skirt the Statue of Liberty nowadays are en route to Fresh Kills. Open burning of dumps, prevalent in rural regions until the late 1960s, was all but eliminated by stricter air-quality standards. Many older incinerators, lacking adequate pollution controls, either were closed or had their operations sharply curtailed. With more and more of the waste stream directed at landfills, the land naturally filled faster. Rapid expansion and heavier loads brought new problems: methane-gas buildup, groundwater contamination from chemical leachates, uneven settling and instability. By the early seventies most municipal authorities who cared to look could see trouble ahead.

AT ABOUT THAT time the burgeoning ecology movement intersected with the first energy crisis to produce a surge of interest in what came to be known as "urban ore." Garbage, some suggested, was too precious to throw out. It contained all manner of valuable resources,

which, if they could only be separated from the rest of the waste, might profitably be sold. A minor boom ensued. An assortment of unproved and often highly speculative resource-recovery technologies were proposed, the majority falling under the general heading of "refuse-derived fuels." The RDF concept seemed beguilingly simple. Once the nonburnable recyclables (chiefly glass and ferrous metals) had been removed, the remainder of the waste would be mechanically reconstituted into a storable, transportable, and above all salable fuel that could be burned to produce energy. RDF, unlike landfills, was a politically attractive idea. Bonds were floated and pilot projects built, and all across America mayors and municipal officials breathed sighs of relief.

The initial prognosis for refuse-derived fuels sounded too good to be true, and, unfortunately, it was. The first wave of RDF facilities was plagued by problems. Equipment failed to function properly. Markets failed to materialize. Mechanical problems were legion: most of the systems relied on high-horsepower slicing and dicing of the waste, and this proved to be more difficult than had been anticipated. "When you're sorting something as heterogeneous as garbage," says Ben Miller, a planner on Paul Casowitz's staff, "a pair of pantyhose can shut the whole thing down, as happened more than once. And there's just the regular abrasive effect of all that gritty stuff, tearing up your conveyor belts and wearing out your elbow joints and that sort of thing." Dust and emissions problems continually occurred, along with occasional explosions. In some places—Bridgeport, Chicago, and Baltimore, for example—RDF plants opened and closed without ever operating satisfactorily. Other cities, mostly smaller communities with municipally owned utilities, deemed their investments in RDF projects too great to write off. Some facilities worked efficiently, but too few did, and enthusiasm rapidly waned in both public and private sectors. "Meanwhile," Ben Miller says, "ten years went by during which basically nothing was done to reduce the rate of landfill depletion."

"What happened," Miller says, "was that the activity in the early seventies was spurred not so much by concern about diminishing landfill capacities as by an interest in possible profits." Paul Casowitz puts it this way: "We forgot what the point was. You don't get into

the business of resource recovery because you think there's gold in the garbage. It's just not there. The point is getting rid of the garbage, and getting rid of garbage is going to be expensive, no matter what technology you use. It's a strategic error to view resource recovery as an economic-development scheme. If economic development becomes your driving force, you aren't going to solve the waste-disposal problem." The early RDF experiments may actually have been counterproductive, in that they left business and government apprehensive about alternative waste-management plans and effectively postponed the inevitable confrontation with unmanageable quantities of garbage. "You can't recover lost time," Casowitz says. "The longer you wait, the tighter the noose gets."

IN 1981 THE New York City sanitation commissioner, Norman Steisel, accepted contract bids and formally proposed that the city construct a "mass-burning," waste-to-energy resource-recovery facility at the old Brooklyn Navy Yard, in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn. This, he warned, would be only the first of many such plants that would have to be built within the next decade if New York was to solve its waste-disposal problem.

Mass burning can hardly be called experimental. In contrast with refuse-derived fuels, the technology seems direct and uncomplicated. In a mass-burning plant nothing is sorted or pre-screened, though some ferrous metals may be recovered. Undifferentiated waste is incinerated at high temperatures in a furnace lined with water-filled tubes. (Hence the term "waterwall" is often applied to the process.) Heat from the burning garbage generates steam, which may be used as is, fed into a municipal steam system, sold, or made to turn turbines, where its energy is converted into electricity. Most of what doesn't burn is hauled to the landfill. Mass burning is neither as sophisticated nor as innovative as RDF, but it can reduce the volume of waste by as much as 90 percent, and it is both proven and reliable. In Europe, where the landfill-depletion problem became evident much earlier on, mass-burning facilities have been used for more than forty years.

At present mass burning is the technology of choice among waste-disposal planners like Steisel and Casowitz, who see their mission in terms not of poten-

tial profit but of landfill reduction and getting rid of the garbage at the lowest possible cost. Many are veterans of RDF debacles and are cautious about the long-term consequences of any plan. In an era of shrinking municipal governments the trend is toward shedding old responsibilities rather than taking on new ones, and the majority of cities would love to get out of the waste-disposal business. Although the private sector is now skeptical of RDF, it has pursued the notion of mass burning with enthusiasm, and most proposed mass-burning installations—including New York's—have been designed with the expectation that they will be either municipally owned and privately operated or wholly independent projects.

Suffice it to say that Steisel's mass-burning proposal was not warmly received. "When I started this job," Paul Casowitz says, "I thought I was getting involved in a motherhood-and-apple-pie issue. It seemed to me that turning garbage into energy was something everybody had to support." He soon learned otherwise. Williamsburg residents, to the surprise of absolutely nobody, mobilized against the plan. Environmentalists complained about potential air pollution from particulate emissions, acid gases, and trace toxins, and protested that not enough effort had gone into recycling programs aimed at trimming the size of the city's waste stream. City politicians, even as they endorsed the idea in principle, deftly avoided any commitment to its realization.

Three years went by. Steisel and Casowitz regrouped. They held public hearings. They lobbied and cajoled. Hoping to overcome the political obstacle (waste-disposal planners call it the Not-In-My-Back-Yard Syndrome), they drafted a revised and more comprehensive plan. This time they proposed seven new plants in addition to the Navy Yard facility, to be located in all five of the city's boroughs. Steisel referred to this as a "share the pain" plan, and he hoped it would help to neutralize at least some of the opposition. In pleading his case once again, in April of 1984, the Commissioner said, "I am concerned that we have already lost too much time. It currently takes six to eight years to implement capital projects such as new schools and firehouses, which often have considerable public support. . . . There is no time left to defer the difficult decisions that must be made, without jeopardizing the welfare of the city

as a whole." The Board of Estimate, New York's fiscal politburo, postponed action until further studies could be made.

Finally, in late December of last year, after marathon arm-twisting by the mayor, a narrow majority on the board approved continued planning for five facilities. Though that move for the first time makes an incinerator program part of city policy, it remains to be seen how much real action will result, and how quickly. The board's vote constitutes a nonbinding recommendation, and there is no guarantee that the board will not later reverse itself, as it has in the past. Public hearings, environmental-impact statements, and city and state approvals are still required before any plant can be



built. The only site for which this lengthy process has even been initiated is the Navy Yard, but Howard Golden, the powerful Brooklyn borough president, has gone on record as vigorously opposed to construction at that location, and few observers doubt his ability to slow things down. The Department of Sanitation says it hopes to have mass-burning facilities operating by 1991, but for now that timetable seems rooted more in optimism than in reality.

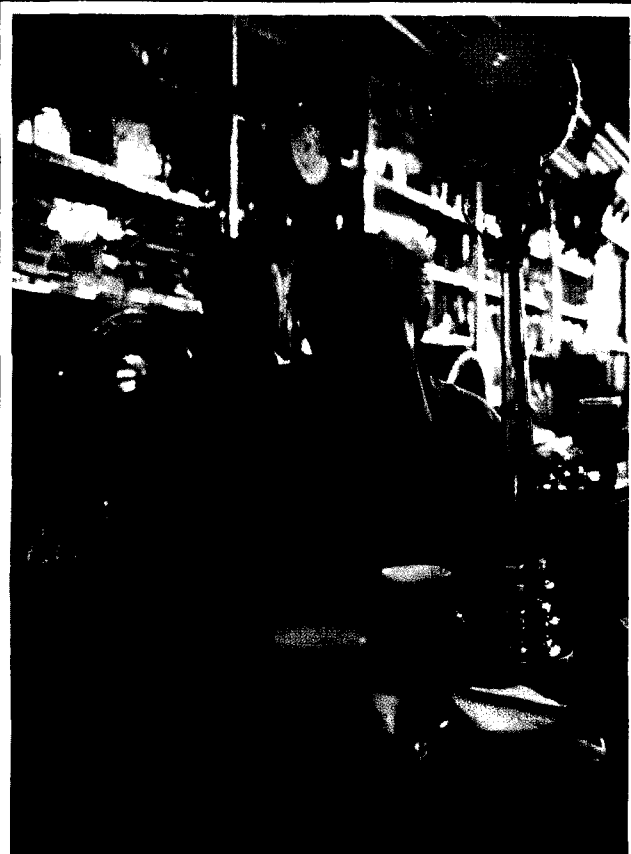
THE OLDEST mass-burning waterwall waste-disposal plant in the United States, and one of the largest, is the Chicago Northwest Waste-to-Energy Facility. It has operated constantly since September of 1970, accepting an average of 1,000 tons of garbage a day and producing steam for sale. Its essential technol-

ogy, like that of all U.S. mass-burning facilities, is European, in this case developed by the Josef Martin Company, of West Germany. The plant is located in a hardscrabble mixed-use neighborhood where older housing backs up against heavy industry, and it fits right in. John Ellis, the plant manager, offered to show me around.

"The only consistent thing about garbage is its inconsistency," Ellis remarked. "It's probably the most heterogeneous material available." We were standing on a narrow balcony overlooking the tipping floor, where trucks discharge garbage into a 10,000-cubic-yard storage pit. Behind us were the gaping maws of the plant's four furnaces. High above, a crane operator maneuvered his machine's cumbrous jaws, depositing huge mouthfuls of miscellaneous refuse into the furnace's feed hoppers: crimson velour sofa cushions and a plastic-wicker laundry basket, two automobile tires and the flattened, two-dimensional frame of a child's tricycle. Ellis explained that the operator wasn't just shoveling stuff in but was trying to alternate wet and dry to achieve the perfect mix. "Fuel management," Ellis called it. Check stubs, one brown sock, the label off a bottle of Canoe cologne, lots of grass clippings. "Grass is high-cellulose. Very moist. But the real problem is that it attracts dirt, which doesn't burn, of course, and causes abrasive problems on the grates." Incredibly, the plant was almost odor-free. "It doesn't stay here long enough to smell," said Ellis, who noted that the building is negative-pressurized to keep odors inside. Another truck grumbled up to disgorge its contents. "Every once in a while we'll get a bad load," Ellis said. "Bedsprings or construction debris, something like that." He shook his head. "I don't like it. Don't want it. It has no redeeming thermal value."

The garbage falls through the hoppers onto steeply inclined reciprocating grates, where it burns at approximately 1600° F. The steam thus generated is used for various purposes on site or sold, to—of all things—a candy company, which uses it in the manufacture of sourballs and peppermints and cream-filled caramels. "Our steam has to be FDA pure," Ellis said, plainly proud that it is. Residues and ash from the furnaces go to a landfill; ferrous metals currently go unreclaimed. Particulate emissions are mitigated with conventional electrostatic precipitators. Stack exhausts are mon-

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itored for acid gases and trace toxins, but to date no special provisions have been made for the control of these substances. In Germany, where rigorous controls are mandated by law, pollution-abatement technologies are the rule. Paul Casowitz sees no reason why similar equipment couldn't be installed at U.S. plants as well, provided we're willing to pay the price. "It's just a question of political will," he says.

The most striking thing about the Chicago Northwest Waste-to-Energy Facility is its ordinariness. A mass-burning plant isn't a playground, obviously, but neither is it the calamity that critics seem to fear, and it is surely no more noxious than a Fresh Kills. The Board of Estimate instructed Commissioner Steisel to respond to concerns about dioxin. His report, released last September, acknowledged that the incidence of cancer might rise by 0.24 to 5.9 cases per million people exposed for seventy years at the point of maximum concentration. The existing cancer rate was pegged at 250,000 cases per million. Barry Commoner, for one, was unconvinced. "We don't understand this thing well enough," he was quoted as telling *The New York Times*. In the same article, Adam Stern, of the Natural Resources Defense Council, sounded slightly more approving. "It has to have proper monitoring," he cautioned. He went on to say, "We don't want to be seen as opponents or trying to slow up the process. We've got to keep moving on this. We've got a real crisis on our hands." Some months later Commoner softened his position, pledging to withdraw his objections if the city would promise to close any incinerator whose dioxin emissions exceeded strict standards.

What are the objections to mass-burning projects? "Well, there are certainly substantive reasons for not wanting one in your neighborhood," says Jim Meyer, a planner for the New York City Department of Sanitation. Dioxin or no dioxin, mass-burning facilities are heavy industry. A mass-burning plant brings an increase in truck traffic, if nothing else, and some measurable degree of environmental degradation. So does an auto plant, of course, or a steel mill. A more fundamental objection, the one at the heart of the environmental movement's lack of enthusiasm for mass burning, is that a rush to build new incinerators will reduce society's incentive to waste less, to recycle more, and to develop better and more reliable resource-recovery

technologies. The real solution to the waste-disposal problem, according to these critics, is to dispose of less waste. Some also argue that new and better technologies, when (and if) they come along, will be difficult to incorporate into mass-burning systems.

"But the next question has to be, What's the alternative?" Ben Miller insists. Garbage disposal is like prisons—a disagreeable social necessity. Everyone realizes that felons have to be incarcerated and trash has to be dumped, but nobody wants a waste-disposal facility or a prison near his or her community. A recently inaugurated mass-burning plant in Westchester County, New York, took twelve years from inception to completion, with the bulk of that time spent seeking a site. As long as the garbage disappears off the curb regularly, the prevailing public sentiment seems to be "out of sight, out of mind"; and the protestations of someone like Paul Casowitz are accorded about as much credence as were the alarms of Chicken Little.

Landfill depletion will probably never be a popular issue. Every politician who has ever run for city office clamors for cleaner streets, but few show much concern for where the sweepings are deposited. New York's constituency for resource-recovery development, Jim Meyer says, lives next door to Fresh Kills. When I asked Paul Casowitz what will happen if, in effect, nothing happens, he replied with weary sarcasm, "Well, there's always Central Park." He went on to amplify slightly. "Is one day going to come when we run out of room? No, probably not. People won't choke on their garbage. But the options will become fewer and the solutions more expensive." As Norman Steisel put it, in the introduction to his most recent proposal:

A collapse of sanitation services due to the total exhaustion of existing landfill capacity is unthinkable and, therefore, unlikely to occur. However, we feel strongly that to defer the implementation of resource recovery will only limit the City's future options, and the need to open new landfills could be one of the undesirable consequences. The impacts of such a scenario were examined as part of this report, but I am sure you will agree that none of us would want to see them become a reality. Such a drastic action, however, might entail reopening a landfill at Ferry Point Park and creating a new one at a site near Co-op City, both in the Bronx, as well as a major expansion of the Fresh Kills

site on Staten Island. Even that would only serve to delay the inevitable crisis, leaving future generations with a new and larger disposal gap in only a few short years. At that point, having consumed all remaining landfill capacity, how the City would handle its garbage can only be left to the imagination.

"We're very conservative here," Paul Casowitz says, "or maybe very cynical. Ultimately, as I like to say, the garbage always wins. That's the nice thing about sanitation. It's a real problem. You can talk and talk and preach and posture and throw up all kinds of excuses as to why you don't want to take any action, but eventually you're going to be confronted by the compelling force of reality."

FOR THE PAST six years Mierle Laderman Ukeles has been the official artist-in-residence at the New York City Department of Sanitation. Her first project, begun in 1979, was *Touch Sanitation*, a performance piece in which she shook the hands of and thanked every one of the city's 8,500 sanitation workers. Subsequent works have included *The Social Mirror*, a twenty-cubic-yard garbage truck sheathed in mirrored glass, and *Ballet Mécanique for Six Mechanical Sweepers*. Ukeles describes what she does as Maintenance Art—"I make art about maintaining things"—and she has dedicated herself to "making visible the terrible gulf between sanitation workers and the public."

On a sparkling afternoon not long ago, Ukeles had an opening. She had transformed an antiquated marine transfer station—a covered pier where trucks loaded garbage onto barges for transport to Fresh Kills—into what was at once an art event and a kind of sanitation museum. She had choreographed a new dance, *Marrying the Barges*, scored for tugboats and scows on the wind-riffled Hudson. Inside she had mounted maintenance installations, some quite documentary (pallet-loads of rakes and brooms, ranks of representative trucks and sweepers) and some more sculptural (for example, *All-Year-Long-Worn-Out-Work-Glove Trough*, a long tray containing 2,200 pairs of ruined work gloves collected from sanitation workers over a year). The crowd was composed of Sanitation Department employees and their families, done up in their Sunday best, and representatives of the farthest-out fringe of the Lower Manhattan avant-garde art scene.

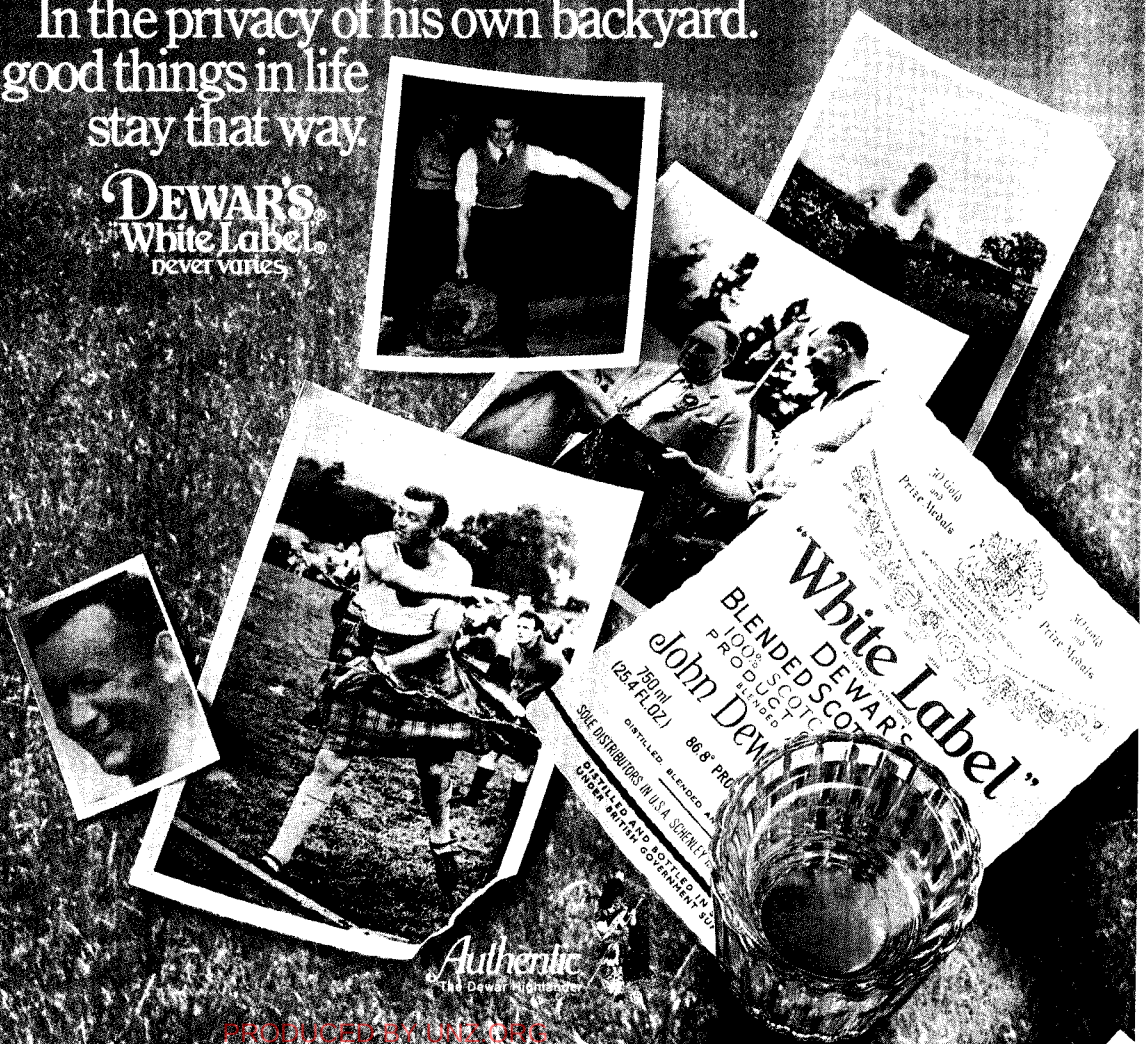


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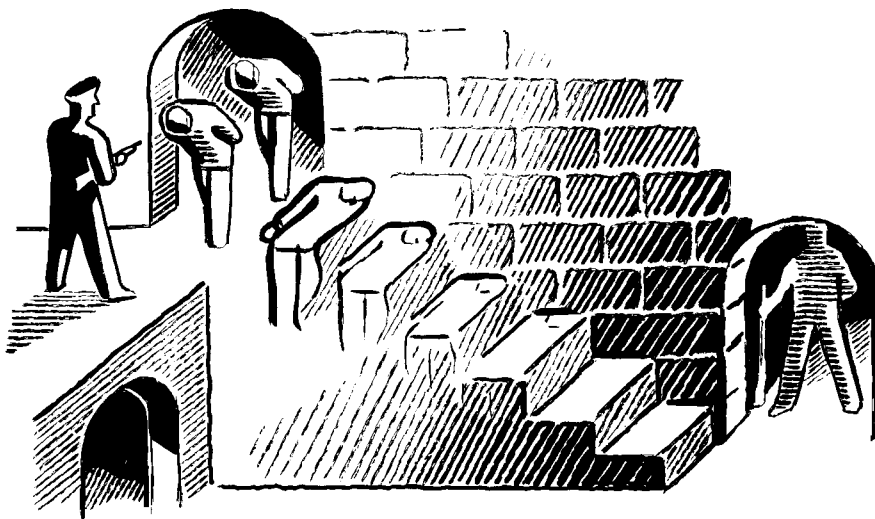


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The artist stood before a microphone at the far end of the station's cavernous interior, attired in an orange Sanitation Department T-shirt and a standard-issue green quilted vest, addressing the assembled throng on the severity of our waste-disposal predicament. "If we don't blow ourselves up in a thermonuclear disaster in the next decade," she said, "the biggest problem we face is what to do with our garbage. And it's a problem we're all going to have to face together." Behind the podium Ukeles

had used a welder's torch to etch her message through the building's sheet-metal wall. In the intense sunlight the words stood out like neon, fire-bright, in foot-high letters: NO MORE LANDFILL SPACE. WHAT WILL WE DO WITH ALL OUR GARBAGE? WHERE? HOW? WHEN?
—J. Tevere MacFadyen

J. Tevere MacFadyen, a specialist on urban and environmental affairs, is the author of Gaining Ground: The Renewal of America's Small Farms.



ARGENTINA

A PROSECUTION IN TROUBLE

President Raúl Alfonsín finds waning concern for the "disappeared"

ERNESTO SABATO, the distinguished Argentine novelist who headed the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (which was set up by President Raúl Alfonsín in December of 1983 and which issued its report last September), used this anecdote to begin the commission's report, whose 50,000 pages document what he called "the greatest and most savage tragedy in the history of Argentina": In Italy, during the hunt for the kidnappers of Aldo Moro, an investigator for the Italian security services proposed to General Carlo Della Chiesa that a prisoner who seemed to have information on the case be tortured. The General rejected the idea, replying, "Italy can survive the loss of Aldo Moro, but it cannot survive the introduction of torture."

"In our country," Sabato noted grimly, "things happened differently." From 1976 to 1983, the report says, Argentine generals fought the crimes of terrorism: the kidnapping, torture, and murder of thousands of Argentines, mostly in their twenties. Sabato calls this time one of "demented and generalized repression." Today its aftermath threatens the social fabric of the country.

Political disappearances during this period—8,961 have been documented—created a new usage in the Spanish language: *desaparecidos*, or the "disappeared." The tally of *desaparecidos* could reach 30,000 as new evidence unfolds. The list of the disappeared includes the names of labor leaders, students, teachers, artists, journalists, psychologists and sociologists, pacifists, nuns and priests, friends of any of these, and friends of their friends. Among the documented cases are 112 children, kidnapped with their parents or born in captivity, and 160 adolescents between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. Few of the disappeared were members of terrorist movements, and those who were either died in combat or committed suicide when captured.

The military leaders who seized power in 1976 were determined to remove surgically the ills that they felt had prevented Argentina from achieving greatness: the cancers of subversion, violence, social conflict, and economic chaos. They settled on their plan, human-rights groups believe, at a secret meeting of the chiefs of staff a year before the coup. The plan was not only to eliminate the youthful guerrillas who endangered Argentina in the early seventies but also to destroy all those aspects of society that the generals believed encouraged subversion: the intellectuals and the professors who had taught guerrillas, the lawyers who defended guerrillas, and the adolescents who, in the military's view, might someday become guerrillas.

After assuming the presidency, in 1976, General Jorge Videla, now in jail facing charges of kidnapping and murder, outlined his philosophy to a French journalist: "Man is a creature of God, created in His image. His duty on earth is to raise a family—the cornerstone of society—and to live a life of respect for his own work and for the property of his neighbor. Every individual who tries to disturb these basic values is subversive, a potential enemy of society, and it is compulsory to prevent him from causing harm."

The cure was drastic, quick, and in its own way impartial. With rare exceptions, including the case of Jacobo Timerman, the military hierarchy refused pleas for the release of prisoners even when the pleas came from ambassadors and Catholic bishops. Officers could not prevent the capture of even their own children—thirty-three sons and daughters of the military were seized and killed.

The armed forces captured most of their victims in front of witnesses, yet in the first years of the military regime few Argentines had any idea of how extensive the abductions were. Argentines had difficulty understanding that their country was caught in a campaign of repression of unprecedented magnitude. People were afraid to talk about what they had seen. Radio and television, controlled by the government, mentioned nothing. Most major newspapers were silent. The regime dealt severely with journalists who tried to report what was going on. Jacobo Timerman was kidnapped, tortured, and jailed in 1977. Under repeated death threats Robert Cox, the editor of the *Buenos Aires Her-*

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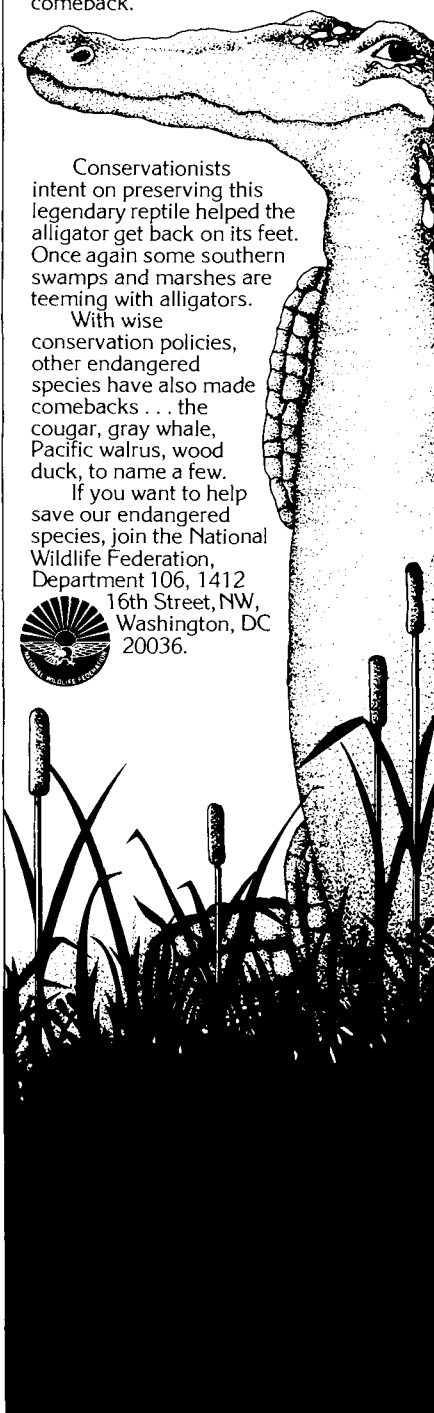
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ald, a 107-year-old English-language newspaper with a small circulation, fled the country in 1979. (The *Herald* published reports on the *desaparecidos* even afterward.) From 1976 to 1979 sixty-eight Argentine journalists disappeared, eighty more were imprisoned on political charges, and 500 fled the country.

Many families did not report their missing relatives, out of fear. Those who did complain sometimes ended up as *desaparecidos* themselves. Some families tried quietly to negotiate the return of a victim through friends or relatives in the armed forces. These negotiations were expensive, wrenching, and, as the families came to learn, futile. Other families kept quiet out of guilt—feeling somehow responsible for what had happened. The military organized a vast television, newspaper, and poster campaign to exploit these guilt feelings. Parents were asked, “How did you bring up your child?” and “Do you know what your child is doing now?” The fourteen women who protested the disappearance of their children by putting white handkerchiefs on their heads in April of 1977 and keeping a silent vigil in front of the presidential palace, in the Plaza de Mayo, were brave exceptions.

In October of 1983, as a result of increasing economic chaos, the military’s failure in the Falklands invasion, and widespread discontent, elections were held in Argentina for the first time in more than ten years. Raúl Alfonsín was elected president by an impressive majority, and today the story of the *desaparecidos* is no longer obscured. It is gory front-page news. Newspapers carry searing accounts of kidnappings, torture, and concentration camps. Unmarked graves and onetime clandestine detention centers are discovered almost every week.

FOR ITS REPORT the Sábato commission compiled testimony from hundreds of relatives of missing persons, numerous former detainees who survived, and some military officers who took part. Yet, as good as the commission’s work was, many questions remain unanswered and many aspects of the military regime’s activities remain hidden. Moreover, the present atmosphere—emotional obsession with the horror, continuing cries for revenge—may obscure the significance of the *desaparecidos* in Argentina and make the quest for justice seem easier than it really is.

The attitudes that molded the Argentine military did not, after all, develop in isolation. The military’s campaign to purge Argentine society, was supported by vast sectors of that society, who felt, as they had many times during the previous fifty years, that only a strong hand could govern the nation’s polarized classes, interests, regions, and political parties. The Argentine population that is now calling for revenge once encouraged the military to make good its claim that, in the words of President Videla, it could “rebuild the relationships between individuals and within communities,” “modernize the ideas and leaders of society,” and “modify the political habits of the people.”

A great majority accepted the medicine prescribed by the military: a ban on political activity and labor unions, the closing of universities and a sharp curtailment of academic inquiry, and censorship of books, movies, plays, and songs. Argentines hoped that such repression would stamp out a murderous and powerful terrorist movement and restore peace and order to their lives.

Persuaded that they could not govern themselves and unaccustomed to democracy, Argentines had since 1966 placed their faith in the almost magical solutions offered at various times by the military, guerrillas, technocrats, and Juan Perón. During this decade Argentine society demonstrated little tolerance for dissidence and critical thinking, and little appreciation for consensus.

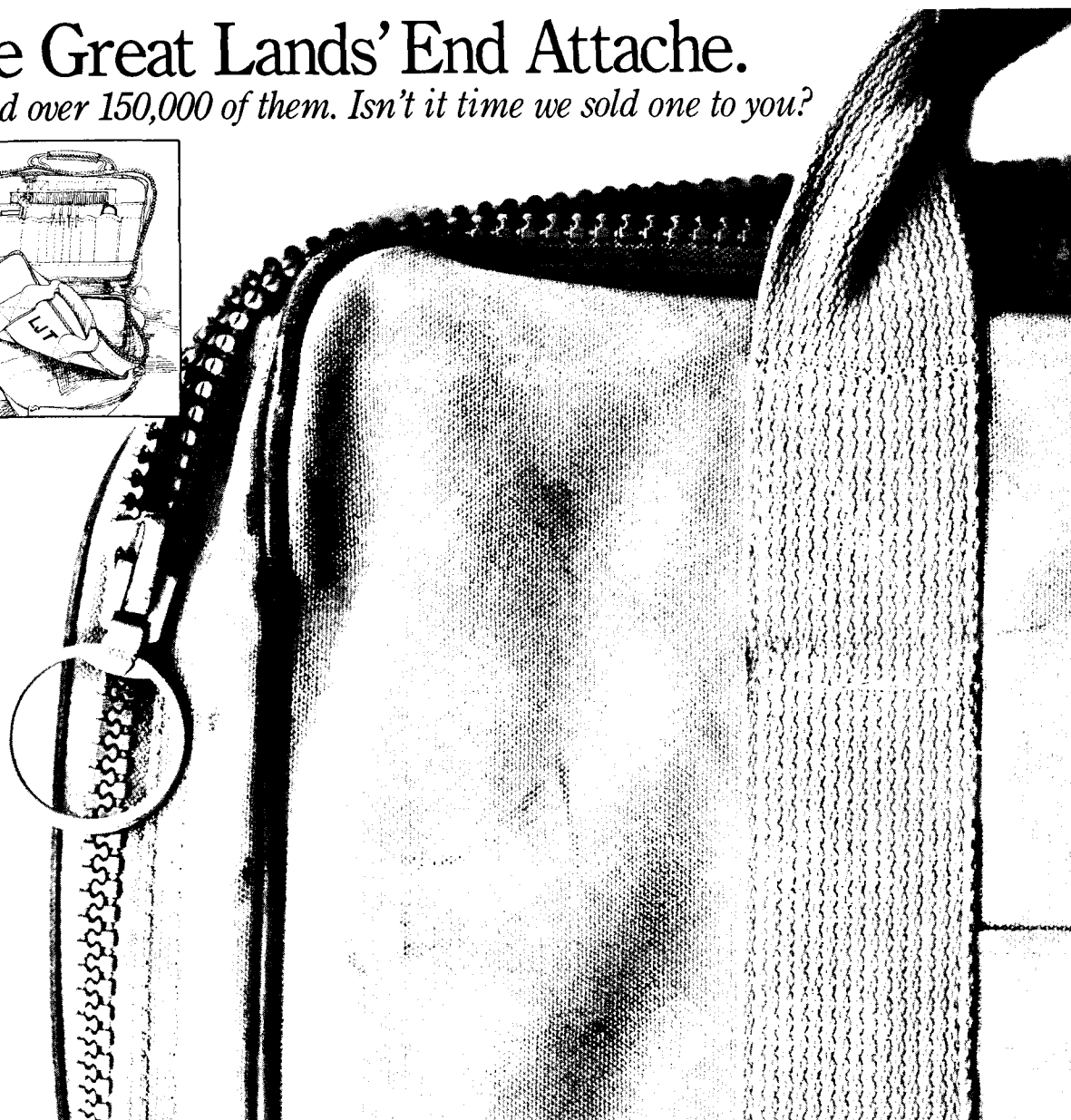
Argentines did not expect the brutality that followed the 1976 coup. Indeed, it was unprecedented. But the Argentine propensity for magical cures doubtless encouraged the military’s belief in its messianic mission and thus helped bring on the atrocities.

In any case, bringing the murderers to justice has proven difficult. A weak civilian government, faced with formidable economic and social problems, is taking on a military that has controlled the country for the past fifty years, that has most of its repressive apparatus intact, and that still thinks of itself as the savior of the Argentine people. Moreover, at the same time that the courts hand down justice, the government is seeking to reform the military. If it fails, the surviving officers may someday be tempted to have their own revenge against those punishing the army now.

In spite of the mounting evidence of crimes, however, no military officer has acknowledged any guilt. In 1980 Gener-

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al Roberto Viola, who in 1981 replaced Videla as president, assured his officers, "It would be treason and a dishonor to allow accusations against those who fought with honor and sacrifice to bring peace to Argentina. A victorious army does not have to settle accounts." Three years later, just before the elections that restored civilian government, the generals issued a National Pacification Law, granting amnesty to all those involved in the repression of subversive activities between May 25, 1973, and June 17, 1982. And, although President Alfonsín nullified that law, the soldiers still believe in the purity of their motives.

To the dismay of human-rights groups, President Alfonsín allowed the Supreme Council, the country's highest military court, to have first crack at judging the accused within the armed forces. He ordered the council immediately to try the nine members of the three juntas that had governed Argentina from 1976 to 1982. A week after the Sábato commission delivered its report to President Alfonsín, the Supreme Council advised the President that it found "unobjectionable" the commands given by the junta leaders in the "fight against the subversive and terrorist delinquency that buffeted our country." The council failed to meet its deadline, of October 11, to complete proceedings against the officers, and Argentina's civilian courts took over the trials of the nine former leaders. Soon after, the members of the council resigned, embarrassing President Alfonsín for having relied on them in the first place. The military has so little expectation of punishment that one high-ranking officer, explaining why the council resigned, remarked to a French journalist, "We are not going to condemn our own comrades in order that the President can have the luxury of amnestying them."

In his role as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Alfonsín has ordered the detention of Admiral Rubén Chamorro, who headed the naval academy when it was used as a torture center, and Brigadier General Ramon Camps, who was the police chief of Buenos Aires during most of the abductions. The last military president, General Reynaldo Bignone, has been charged with responsibility for the deaths of two draftees which occurred when he was head of the military school. Captain Alfredo Astiz, accused of several sadistic murders, was detained as a result of pressure by the Swedish government, which wants him

tried for his role in the murder of a young Swedish woman in Argentina. By the end of 1984 only six military officers were under arrest on charges related to the *desaparecidos*.

Testimony collected by the Sábato commission implicates more than 1,300 military officers—many still in active service and some recently promoted—in kidnapping, torture, and murder. But pressure on the government from the military, the right-wing political parties, some bishops of the Catholic Church, and sectors within Alfonsín's own Radical Party have prevented publication of the full list of names.

Already, many Argentines may be losing interest in the *desaparecidos*. The crowd of 70,000 demonstrating outside the presidential palace during the presentation of the Sábato commission report was small by Argentine standards. An activist at the demonstration deplored the fact that "we are always the same bunch." In order to reform the army Alfonsín must have an indignant population behind him. Yet, as he hesitates, that support dwindles. His minister of the interior has warned the Argentines that those who suspect every soldier of murder are much like those soldiers who once suspected every young person of being a subversive. Such words do not go down well with relatives of the victims. Though he may be right in principle, the relatives fear that his words are only an excuse to hold back on prosecutions. The organization Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo insists that many of those guilty of kidnapping, torture, and murder are still free and have been reappointed by the present administration to their previous positions.

EVEN IF ALFONSIN had more support and more time, the problems might be insoluble. Though most observers agree that the attitudes of Argentine society must be changed, that the military must be reformed from within, and that far-reaching change is more desirable than revenge, the means to those ends are not wholly clear.

One step Alfonsín has taken is toward a smaller armed forces under civilian control. He has substantially cut the military budget, the number of generals in active service, and the number of young men to be drafted in 1985. He has appointed civilian secretaries over the armed forces and removed military officers from the administration of state-controlled industries.

Alfonsín's biggest task is to make the armed forces an organization of national defense rather than, in effect, an army of occupation. This means moving military bases from the major cities, where they control the population, to the nation's borders. Alfonsín started by disbanding the First Army, a key factor in the military coups of the past fifty years, and transferring its units from its headquarters in the heart of Buenos Aires to military bases throughout the country. Its old camp will become a campus of the University of Buenos Aires. He has also reduced the tension between Argentina and Chile over the islands in the Beagle Channel, thus denying the armed forces a traditional excuse for building themselves up. The Alfonsín administration has introduced in the war colleges courses on the role of the armed forces in a democracy—taught by civilians. Yet even if these measures are successful, at least a generation will be needed to reform the Argentine military.

Moreover, Argentina needs far more than reform of the military to ensure that it will never again face a horror like that of the *desaparecidos*. It must have a society that has confidence in democracy, that accepts consensus, that does not reel from one magic solution to another. Reform of the educational system, so that it emphasizes the ills of the past and the worth of democracy, might help. But far more important would be a sustained period of democracy, such as Argentina has seldom had in the past—a period that might make Argentines confident about their ability to mediate differences and work out solutions to painful issues together. But they will not have such a period unless they are patient. Alfonsín is now asking a severely punished society, ravaged by an annual inflation rate of nearly 700 percent and with little hope of improvement in its standard of living for at least ten years, for patience. He is asking the army to reform itself while asking others to forgo revenge. In view of Argentina's history, it may be difficult for the Argentines to show patience with the slow workings of a democratic government. But the Argentine people's support for their infant democracy may be all that prevents a return of terror.

—Elizabeth Fox

Elizabeth Fox, who was co-author of a recent Atlantic Report from Argentina, worked as a development specialist for a Canadian foundation in Buenos Aires.

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THREE WOMEN—HATING, LOVING, AND JUST “LIVING” THROUGH THE DIFFICULT EIGHTIES

BY LYNN CARAGANIS

JENNIFER AND KATE put the groceries away in the Plattsburgh farmhouse, Kate's sleek bell-bottom pants and carelessly tossing hair contrasting strangely with Jennifer's simple plaid muumuu and untidy bun.

"It's hard to believe, coming back to the farm in Plattsburgh after Manhattan, that some people actually live here!" said Kate, shaking her head. "No theater! No ballet!"

Feeling inferior as she put away canned goods, Jennifer was silent. I mustn't show that I'm upset, she told herself, for the millionth time since Kate's arrival at the farm that morning.

"Don't you think so, Jen?" persisted Kate.

"Yes, I suppose you're right," Jennifer answered. Damn! she said to herself.

"I could hardly keep from laughing out loud when I saw the cashier's hairdo in the supermarket!"

"Yes, that was funny."

"She's probably stupid, too," continued Kate.

It began to snow outside as the girls finished up their chores, arranging the last canned goods and thriftily folding up the bags. Side by side, they stared out at the snow for a moment, perhaps thinking that it—falling, falling—was like the years that fall away from a woman's life, and the boyfriends, and the dreams that don't come true, as life turns her this way and that like a hollow reed.

"I remember standing here this way when we were little children," said

Kate. "I was older than you, and I recited 'Star light, star bright . . .' Remember?"

Jennifer nodded gently. For a moment the two women just enjoyed the shared closeness.

"I never dreamed then what the future would bring," Kate continued. "Like most girls, I thought I'd marry a Prince Charming—wear a white dress, children, the whole bit! I never thought I'd actually move to Manhattan and attend graduate school!"

Jennifer coughed painfully. "I—I'd better start the spinach salad." She moved away quickly so that her sister, Kate—the smart one, the brave one, the one who always got everything—wouldn't see her quiet tears.

"I never thought I'd be attending graduate school!" shouted Kate. "Oh, Jen, you wouldn't believe how nervous I was, taking my GREs. I kept thinking, Me?? Then, when my scores came in the mail, I thought I *might* get into Rutgers . . . but Columbia! I thought Columbia was out of the question. Oh, I'm so happy, and my professors are so handsome!" At this she ran into the bright kitchen to embrace her sister, and saw that she was crying.

"Why, Jen, what is it?"

"Nothing, Kate, I'm just so happy for you and everything," she said lamely.

But Kate knew something was wrong and for a moment peered carefully into the eyes of her sister, and as she did so, her own eyes took on a steely expression. Shrieking, she punched her.

"Jealous! You're jealous of me and you always have been! Ever since—Paul!"

But Kate didn't know her little sister and what the month since she had moved to New York City had wrought on that dormant soul.

"Be careful how far you push me, Miss Graduate School," spat Jennifer, the flush in her cheeks making her almost pretty. "Yes, you're surprised that I'm standing up to you now. You didn't know, did you, that day in, day out on this lonely farm I've been studying too." She threw back her head and let out a peal of hysterical laughter. "I know judo. And Paul taught me!" Hastily she pulled up the sleeve of her muumuu over the once delicate wrist. It was bulging with muscles! "Now I too can have a fuller erotic and professional life!"

Kate stiffened and fell back a step. "Okay, okay, take it easy," she said. "Don't get so uptight."

AT THIS MOMENT a car was heard coming down the long drive from the highway to the farm that their grandfather had cleared with nothing but an old plow. As the sound grew louder, the two sisters—one a graduate student, the other a farmer—stared into each other's eyes. Jennifer broke the silence at last and began to set the table, saying, "That must be her—Mother."

"Well, she hasn't been much of a mother to me!" screamed Kate. "But if she's coming here tonight, there's nothing I can do about it. But why, why can't she accept the fact that there's more to a

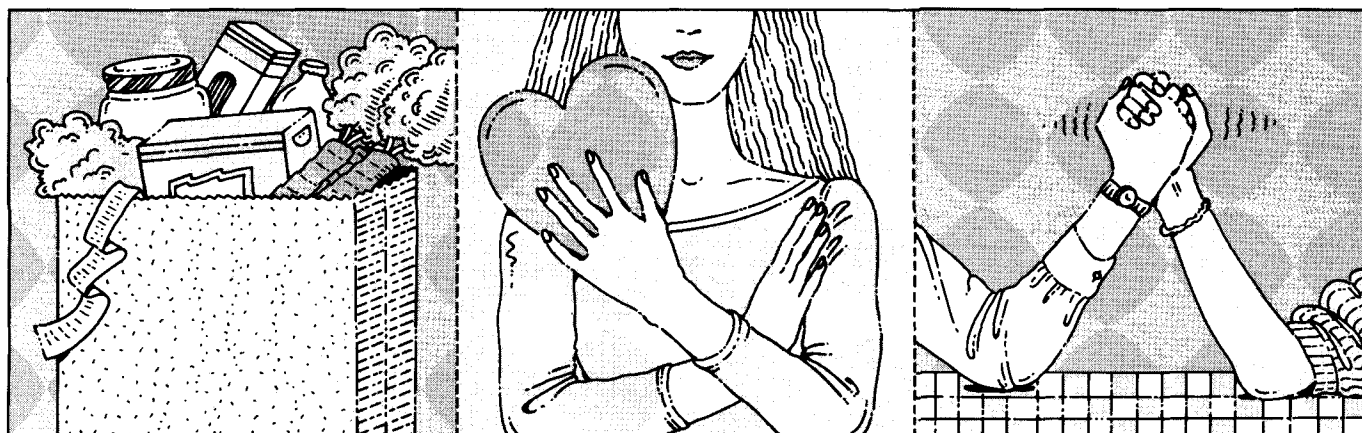


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woman's life than obedience and procreation?"

"Get the door, Kate," said her sister.

Sullenly Kate went through the quaint sitting room of the farm, and patted her long, free hair as she passed an old-fashioned mirror. She was attractive . . . more attractive than Jennifer, and she knew it. Approaching the door, she set her mouth in an angry expression of defiance.

"Hello, Mama."

"You've never liked me, have you, Kate? You don't like me now, as a grown woman, any more than you did when, as a toddler, you saw me accidentally nudge your father and he fell down the stairs that Christmas Eve."

"Because he was a dreamer, Mama Edna. You couldn't stand that."

The older woman's silence acknowledged that this was the truth.

"You're looking well, Mama Edna," continued Kate, condescendingly, as she took the older woman's coat and shut the door behind them.

"No, dear, don't do that," said her mother.

"Why not?"

Her mother looked uneasily around the sitting room of "the farm."

"Because I'm not alone."

Kate stared.

"It's . . . Paul."

Mother and daughter locked eyes in an age-old war of struggling female wills, so different from when men get mad at each other. And they knew that this was only the beginning. For there was the tense cocktail hour to be gotten through. Ancient grudges would flare up during dinner—things that could be neither resolved nor forgotten. There would be the problem of the dishes and who would do them. Some or all three of them might be felled by menstrual cramps or another woman's problem by then. And for women hideously constricted by feminine bonds, as these three were, an untold number of such searing reunions lay ahead: christenings, face-lifts, divorces, graduations, Halloween parties, and innovative weddings. They knew it, and they faced it. It was the price they paid and would go on paying till, perhaps in the nineties, they learned just to turn on the TV, as Paul was wanting to do right now, and haggle over a Knicks game, and punch one another's biceps. But all that lay far in the future. □

Lynn Caraganis, a writer who lives in New Jersey, is at work on a novel.

MARCH 1985

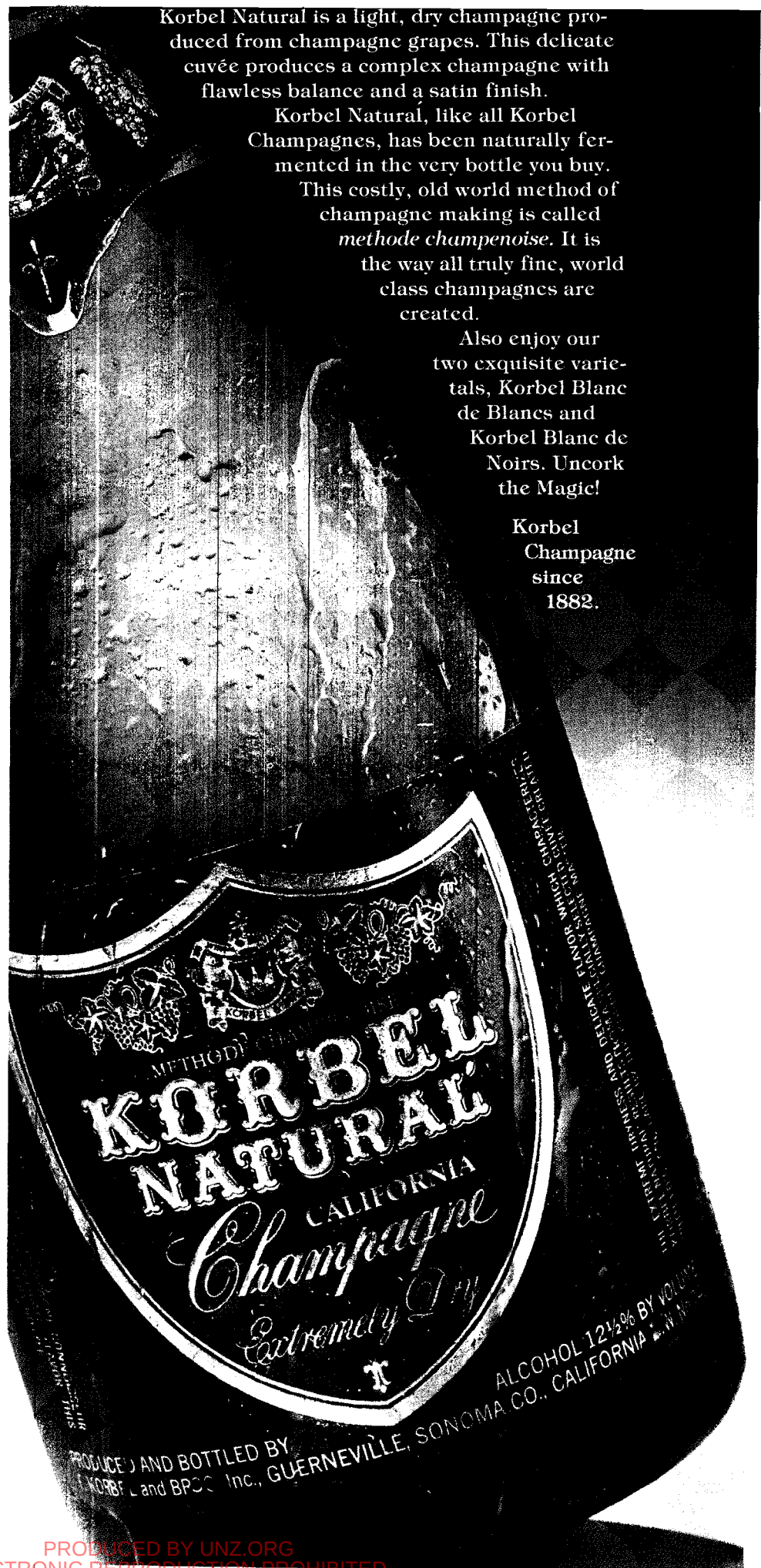
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On Leadership

What is leadership? Its qualities are difficult to define. But they are not so difficult to identify.

Leaders don't *force* other people to go along with them. They *bring* them along. Leaders get commitment from others by giving it themselves, by building an environment that encourages creativity, and by operating with honesty and fairness.

Leaders demand much of others, but also give much of themselves. They are ambitious—not only for themselves, but also for those who work with them. They seek to attract, retain and develop other people to their full abilities.

Good leaders aren't "lone rangers." They recognize that an organization's strategies for success require the combined talents and efforts of many people. Leadership is the catalyst for transforming those talents into results.

Leaders know that when there are two opinions on an issue, one is not bound to be wrong. They recognize that hustle and rush are the allies of superficiality. They are open to new ideas, but they explore their ramifications thoroughly.

Successful leaders are emotionally and intellectually oriented to the future—

not wedded to the past. They have a hunger to take responsibility, to innovate, and to initiate. They are not content with merely taking care of what's already there. They want to move forward to create something new.

Leaders provide answers as well as direction, offer strength as well as dedication, and speak from experience as well as understanding of the problems they face and the people they work with.

Leaders are flexible rather than dogmatic. They believe in unity rather than conformity. And they strive to achieve consensus out of conflict.

Leadership is all about getting people consistently to give their best, helping them to grow to their fullest potential, and motivating them to work toward a common good. Leaders make the right things happen when they're supposed to.

A good leader, an effective leader, is one who has respect. Respect is something you have to have in order to get. A leader who has respect for other people at all levels of an organization, for the work they do, and for their abilities, aspirations and needs, will find that respect is returned. And all concerned will be motivated to work together.



*Is the decline in the industrial belt a
step into perilous new territory or is it merely a
continuation of the ceaseless transformation that built our prosperity?*

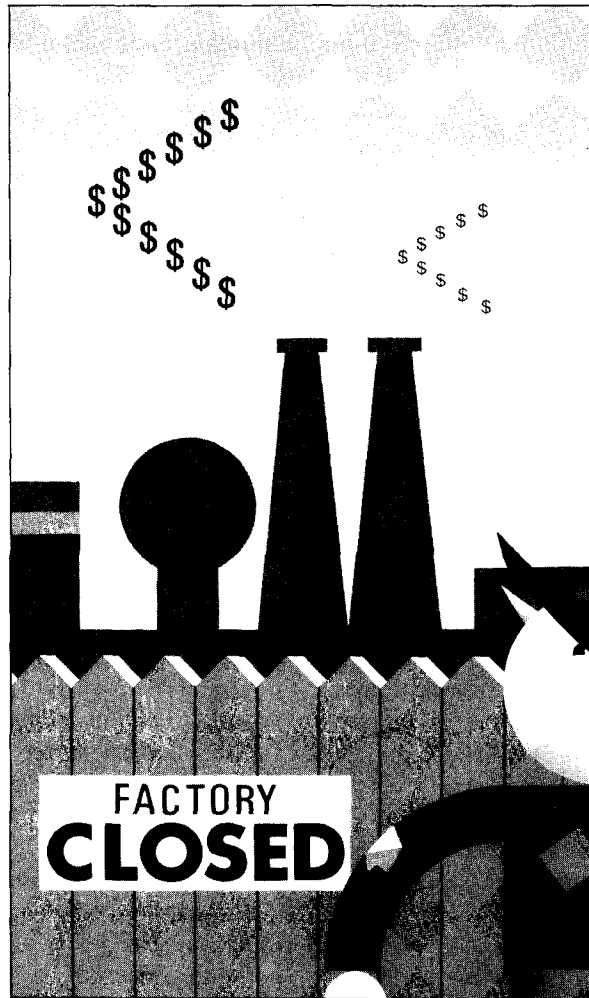
AMERICA'S CHANGING ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

BY JAMES FALLOWS

ON THE LAST DAY OF 1980, when Jimmy Carter had been defeated and the question of further political damage to him was moot, a commission that Carter had appointed, called the President's Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties, issued a report, *Urban America in the Eighties: Perspectives and Prospects*. It was written in diplomatic, understated prose, which may initially have obscured the import of its message. Its meaning did not long remain concealed, however, for within days the report was taken in the northern half of the country as a declaration of war.

The clues to why this should be so lay in the report's introduction, which described economic life as ceaseless, churning change. Industries rose and fell—and so did empires, and so did cities. Nothing endured forever, and in the real world of economics it was vain to hope that anything would. “An increasingly productive economy should be recognized as necessitating simultaneous painful growth and shrinkage, disinvestment and reinvestment,” the report said. “Disinvestment” was another way of saying that industries might die and cities fade. The shape of America's cities reflected the painful growths and shrinkages that had already occurred, as immigrants arrived from the hinterland and from overseas, emigrants departed for the frontier, new classes rose and built temples to themselves, and other classes fell.

Yet somehow, the report mused, “the city is perceived



as something that should be largely permanent and unchanging, reflecting continuity and stability, promising to be a lasting monument to society's achievements and failures, and serving as a testimony to the success with which people have hammered out relations among themselves.” This vision of a city might seem appealing, the report concluded, but it was naive and unrealistic, and in the United States it had never been accurate.

And it could not be accurate now, according to the report, because the American economy was undergoing yet another transformation, one that was sure to make the nation's older cities more suitable for some functions and less for others. In particular, the big, broad-shouldered places from which America's twentieth-century industrial wealth had been wrung—Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit—could not expect to survive in their current form. There had been much talk about “revitalizing”

these cities, through means as genteel as the movement of young professionals into marginal neighborhoods or as direct and unrefined as large redevelopment projects. But if revitalization “is defined as the attempt to restore our older industrial cities and regions to the influential positions that they have held throughout the industrial era, urban revitalization shall surely fail.”

In the face of such a certainty, the report argued, the government should stop trying to ward off the inevitable by subsidizing specific cities or regions. After all, its obligations were to people, not to the places where they happened to live, and people had often advanced by moving

James Fallows is the Washington editor of The Atlantic.

someplace else. The postwar growth of California had done more for the people of Appalachia and the Midwest than had any targeted-assistance program. The government could best discharge its obligations "by removing barriers to mobility that prevent people from migrating to locations of economic opportunity, and by providing migration assistance to those who wish and need it."

In other words, as the report was soon translated in the daily press, the President's commission was recommending that Americans vote with their feet. FEDS TO NORTH-EAST: DROP DEAD, said the headline in the *New York Daily News*.

LIKE OTHER BITS OF CARTER-ERA DETRITUS, *URBAN America in the Eighties* soon left the news, but the report amounted to the first shot in the economic battle of this decade. The battle is about the way in which the United States should view the tumultuous economic change that seems to lie ahead. Should it rest secure in the faith that despite the disruptions and human friction we may endure, the shift away from heavy industry and the heavy-industrial belt is just the latest twist on the same process that created America's wealth? Or might this transition be something quite different? Could it be a step into unknown and perilous territory, where we will find less equality, fewer jobs, more suffering, and less of the spiritual and material glue that has helped the nation cohere?

The political battle lines are being drawn between those who think the economic future is promising and those who see lowering signs. Within the Republican Party the pizzazz now seems to belong to a group of congressmen who are urging the United States toward their vision of a "Conservative Opportunity Society." These COS politicians, the most visible of whom are Representatives Jack Kemp, of New York, and Newt Gingrich, of Georgia, express an unmixed optimism that economic benefits lie ahead. The only difficulty on the road to tomorrow is keeping the federal government and its tax code out of the way. The COS spokesmen claim that they can win over even such bedrock Democratic groups as black voters, once they make clear that they are talking about opportunity for everyone.

Within the Democratic Party there is a cleavage over the changing economy that is leading to an ugly fight. One group of politicians, mainly from places other than the Midwest and the Northeast, has been recommending that the United States get moving toward a higher-tech economy. They see a big role for the government in that transition; it should be encouraging research and development, retraining workers, targeting its incentives, and generally seeing that things proceed on course. As incarnated in Gary Hart, this movement lost the 1984 nomination to Walter Mondale and the tradition that the political analyst Kevin Phillips has cruelly but precisely called "reactionary liberalism."

The label is less derogatory than it may sound, for it captures the challenge that many liberals feel they now face:

the defense of noble values that have come under unprecedented assault. Since the New Deal they and their forebears have helped build a healthy labor movement, raise the working-class wage, create a social "safety net," and establish the Democratic Party as the guarantor of such benefits. From the party's base to the unions' survival, every one of those achievements is now threatened by the industrial and regional shift. These liberals see the rise of foreign competition as another way of cutting the union wage; they know that the growing prominence of the Sun Belt means electoral trouble for the Democrats. Can it be a surprise that they speak in "reactionary" terms, seeking to preserve what they have built? Whereas *Urban America* urged the government to help people hit the road, a recent book called *Rebuilding America*, by Gar Alperovitz and Jeff Faux, exemplified the liberal emphasis on community stability: "The sensible planning answer clearly is to shift the money and physical capital involved in making cars to making something else—in *Detroit*."

Even though Walter Mondale was trounced by Ronald Reagan, his wing of the Democratic Party heavily influences national discussion of economic change. The conservatives may have George Gilder, but the liberals have Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, whose book *The Deindustrialization of America* out-facts Gilder by about a hundred to one in its grim recitation of jobs lost, factories closed, and hopes destroyed.

The outcome of this argument over "deindustrialization" matters, because societies find ways of deflecting the things that frighten them. When they see change as a threat, they manage to retard it. The government can be pressured into taking over businesses that the market would let die, as happened with the English steel and coal and auto industries before Margaret Thatcher came to power. It can subsidize people to stay where they "should," as France has done with its numerous farmers and Italy has attempted to do with its southerners. When, on the other hand, societies are indifferent to the costs of economic change, they glorify their Gradgrinds and Bunderbys, who may have risen largely through luck, and sneer at those who fall by the way.

Should the United States fear the change that is under way? The strongest evidence that it should might be found in South Chicago.

ALONG THE SOUTH SHORE OF LAKE MICHIGAN, IN A thirty-five-mile crescent that starts on the east in Burns Harbor, Indiana, runs through Gary and Hammond, and stretches to the southern edges of Chicago, lies the densest concentration of steel mills in the world. The neighborhoods at the western end of the crescent, barely visible to drivers who zoom southward from Chicago on the Chicago Skyway, have names like Irondale, Millgate, Slag Valley. They consist of bungalows and two-or-three-deckers, built right up against the factory walls. Apart from the mills the biggest structures in South

Chicago are St. Michael's Cathedral, which was briefly in contention to be the seat of the Archdiocese of Chicago, and the United Steelworkers union hall.

The first settlers in South Chicago were a mixture of English, Irish, Germans, and Swedes, but around the turn of the century new groups came. The Poles arrived during the "new immigration" of eighty years ago, and they still predominate around many of the steel mills. Mexican immigrants and blacks from the South came shortly afterward, drawn by the labor shortages of the First World War and efforts to break the nationwide steel strike of 1919.

They found themselves on a battlefield of class war and naked strife. The Communist Party was strong in Chicago early in the century; the city was the organizing center of the 1919 strike, when 400,000 workers left the mills for four months but finally were beaten by the companies. Even more than 1919, 1937 seems to count as Year Zero in the steel communities, for on Memorial Day of that year demonstrators marching in front of Republic Steel were gunned down by the police. Ten were killed and eighty more were injured. Nearly fifty years later, at a time when young Americans are said to know almost nothing about Watergate or Vietnam, let alone events pre-dating the Second World War, steelworkers in their thirties made sure I saw the exact points where the shots were fired and the Republic Steel martyrs fell.

The biggest mill now operating along the lake is Inland Steel's plant in East Chicago, Indiana, with some 22,000 employees. Bethlehem, Interlake, U.S. Steel, and LTV are all still making steel, though with smaller work forces than they employed ten years ago. Some of the factories, especially those that have diversified into high-value specialty steel, are getting along. But two important plants have closed, and (although no one wants to hear this in South Chicago) they are probably gone forever. They are the Wisconsin Steel Works, so named even though it is in Illinois, and the famous South Works of U.S. Steel. Their histories help explain why "displaced workers" feel as if the rules of life have suddenly and unfairly been changed.

Until 1977 Wisconsin Steel was owned by the International Harvester Company, and much of Wisconsin's steel went straight into IH tractors and combines. For most of its existence it had been a profitable, docile plant putting out a high-quality product, but by the mid-1970s it was costing Harvester money. In 1976 it lost almost \$20 million. Why was the plant failing? The reasons were the familiar combination that has affected so many of America's heavy industries. The steel market had become truly worldwide, and American companies had to compete against low-wage operations overseas, many of which enjoyed government subsidies; the Japanese steadily modernized their mills, and most American companies failed to; new labor contracts sent American wages soaring, at just the moment when the industry was becoming intrinsically less competitive. And, in Harvester's case, a management team that eventually drove the entire parent company to the brink of bankruptcy made strategic errors.

The solution to the Wisconsin Steel problem, from Harvester's point of view, was to "sell" the mill to Envirodyne, a tiny California-based engineering firm whose total sales were only a small fraction of Wisconsin Steel's. In a transaction that makes sense only when seen through the prism of the U.S. tax laws, Harvester lent Envirodyne \$50 million of Wisconsin Steel's \$65 million purchase price; the rest came from the Chase Manhattan Bank. All that Harvester asked in exchange was a lien on the Wisconsin Steel Works and related iron and coal mines.

Envirodyne was led by peppy young executives who were frequently profiled in business magazines. Everyone may have hoped that with such new management Wisconsin Steel could be turned around. But in 1979 it lost \$44 million. Meanwhile, a federal loan, intended to finance the renovation of the steelmaking equipment, was stalled for a year inside the government—and just after it came through, the fatal blow fell. In November of 1979 the United Auto Workers struck Harvester. For the next five months Wisconsin Steel was without its most important customer. Seeing the drift of things, Harvester foreclosed on its loan to Envirodyne and sent Wisconsin Steel into bankruptcy. On March 28, 1980, a Friday and a payday, the 3,400 steelworkers learned that the mill had closed.

Only the night before, some union members had heard from company officials that Wisconsin Steel was secure. Chase Manhattan apparently knew otherwise, for it froze the company's assets so quickly that the workers' final paychecks bounced. Their medical insurance also ended as of that day; they received no severance pay and none of the "supplemental unemployment benefits" that have become so important a part of labor contracts in heavy industry.

The Wisconsin Steel transaction had been a big net plus for International Harvester: R. C. Longworth, of the *Chicago Tribune*, calculated that the sale had saved Harvester \$130 million, through the operating losses, pension obligations, and anti-pollution investments it had been spared. Envirodyne escaped mortal harm, since it had set up a shell corporation to protect it from liability for some \$62 million in unfunded pension obligations. The reputations of some of its officials were damaged, but its original assets remained intact. For the Wisconsin Steel employees, however, it was the end of the world. Not only were they out of work but the accompanying pensions and other benefits, which become the motivating focus for those who spend more than a few years in factory life, seemed to have disappeared. (Eventually the federal government joined the list of losers, since the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation picked up some of the pension obligations. The Economic Development Administration, which had guaranteed some of Envirodyne's loans, wound up holding title to the mill.)

The steelworkers responded with a performance as plucky as it was pathetic. Wisconsin Steel had long been unionized, but not by the United Steelworkers. Its workers were represented by an independent union known as

the Progressive Steelworkers. A few weeks after the shutdown the Progressive Steelworkers held a meeting to assure employees that everything would be all right. For years the union had paid a \$35,000 annual retainer to Edward Vrdolyak, the Chicago alderman who is king of the South Chicago wards. According to a newspaper report, Vrdolyak, in his role as the union's counsel, breezed into the meeting "sporting a fresh Florida tan" and told the workers that he would be taking care of them. Mayor Jane Byrne said that she would be doing likewise—and since she was at that time stumping for Jimmy Carter in the Illinois primary, everyone got the point that the federal government would be there to help if Chicago voted right. Just before the 1980 election Byrne appeared at another meeting. Straight from a talk with Jimmy Carter, she told the workers that everything was set and the plant would be open soon. "There'll be turkey on the table for Thanksgiving," she said to rousing cheers. Whether or not Carter would have done anything if re-elected, he was beaten, and the steelworkers began to look less to Byrne and Vrdolyak and more to Frank Lumpkin.

Lumpkin had come to Wisconsin Steel in 1950, thirty years before the mill closed. He was born in Georgia in 1916, one of ten children in a family of farm workers that migrated to Florida in 1922. He headed north in search of work during the Depression, started in steel in Buffalo in 1938, spent time as a prizefighter, and came to Chicago after service in the Merchant Marine during the war. At Wisconsin he started as a "chipper," removing defects from steel with an air hammer, and moved through a variety of jobs; he was a skilled millwright in the Wisconsin Steel tool shop when the mill closed down.

Lumpkin is by nature an organizer, and he had tried to establish a more aggressive alternative to the company union throughout his time at Wisconsin Steel. Within weeks of the shutdown he had used his previous base to put together the Save Our Jobs Committee. For the five years since then he and his supporters have tried to recover some of what they lost when the mill went down.

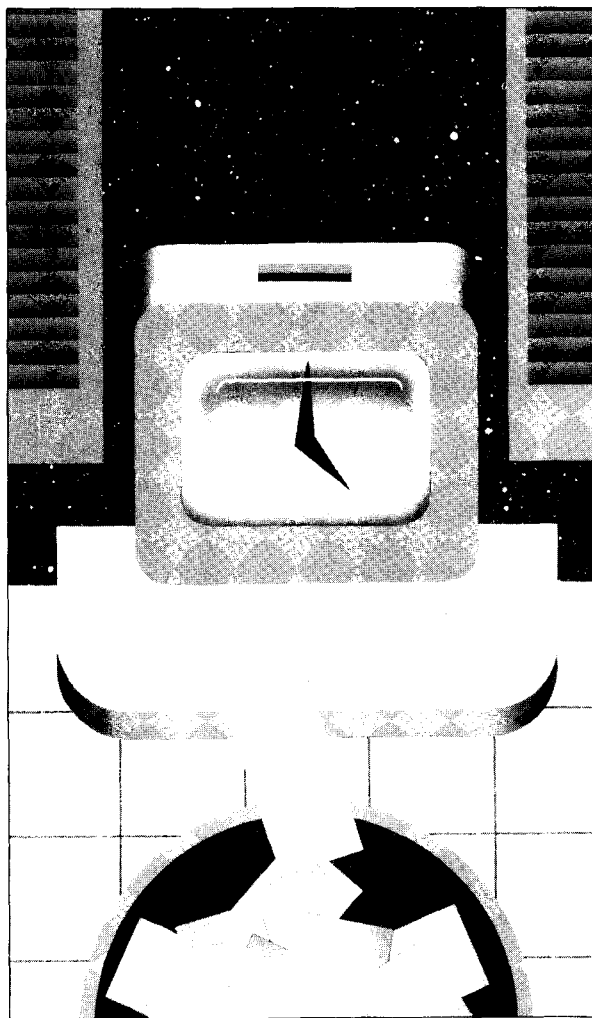
One blustery day last March, for example, Lumpkin and some forty members of Save Our Jobs rode in a yellow

ex-school bus from the blighted streets of South Chicago to International Harvester's headquarters, in the Loop. The Harvester building is an imposing bronze-colored skyscraper, which sits just off the lake. The group had come to picket in front of it. As the marchers circled, a freezing wind blasted from the north, tearing the placards—"Jobs or Income Now!" "Wisconsin Steelworkers Need Pensions"—from their hands or turning them upside down. About ten of the marchers were white and the rest Mexican-American or, like Lumpkin, black. They wore nylon windbreakers and working jackets—no overcoats—and knit caps. They walked for an hour at lunch-

time, as professional men and women in topcoats or down-filled jackets scurried in and out of the building. They attracted a moment's attention from a television crew; Lumpkin and the group's young lawyer, Thomas Geoghegan, said a few words into the camera about their suit to recover lost pension rights and their hope that the mill would reopen. Then the marchers climbed into the bus and rode back home.

ON THE BUS, OR IN THE decrepit Save Our Jobs office, located over a South Side restaurant, or in the parlors of their houses, the Wisconsin Steel workers tell the same story time and again. They think someone should be able to help them get the plant reopened, but no one wants to try. Thomas Geoghegan has filed an enormously complex lawsuit against Harvester, alleging that it cannot escape its obligation for \$15 million to \$20 million in pension rights

and other benefits that accrued while it owned Wisconsin Steel. (Both the company and the former employees filed motions for summary judgment in the summer of 1983; by the end of 1984 the judge still had not ruled on whether the case would come to trial.) The steelworkers keep asking why Harvester and Envirodyne and now the federal government should just walk away from the plant, when its modernized Number Six Mill is perfectly capable of making steel, and when steel is needed to repair so many bridges and buildings. They see bridges corroding and work that needs to be done all around them on the South Side. Why can't they go back to the mill and make the



steel their community needs? The government already owns the plant: why doesn't it just start it up again? As time has gone on and no one has answered these questions, the Save Our Jobs Committee has become more modest in its goals. Its ambition now is to keep a demolition company from dismantling Number Six Mill.

The Wisconsin Steel work force was old—theirs was a stable mill, without a lot of new blood. A few of the workers have found other jobs. One, a black man in his forties, does odd jobs like installing bathtubs and fixing gutters. (“I used to make \$650 a week, maybe \$750 with overtime. When you go from that to zero, it takes some adjusting.”) Another, a grave-faced Mexican-American in his fifties, says he spends eight hours a day looking for aluminum cans and flattening them out. Most say that they are too old and the prospects are too bad.

They say they make ends meet by living with their children, or relying on their wives' earnings, or eating the free government cheese that Frank Lumpkin has been distributing, or eking out their company benefits. Most exhausted their unemployment insurance long ago. The few with thirty years' service, including Lumpkin, get nearly their full pensions from the government's Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation. Also, under the elaborate pension formula known as the Rule of 65, most of those with twenty years' service get a meager benefit of about \$100 a month, designed to supplement the Social Security they will eventually collect. They are owed an average of \$5,000 in severance pay alone and more in other lost benefits. The members of the Save Our Jobs Committee are starting to die.

LAST APRIL I SAT WITH LUMPKIN AND HIS WIFE, BEA, in their home, five miles from the old Wisconsin Steel Works. Practically speaking, the two of them are out of harm's way. Lumpkin has his pension; he has become a kind of hero; their children, unlike so many from the area, have effected a miraculous escape. One is in the computer business, another is an M.D., a third is a mathematician, and a fourth is a biologist who was returning that day from Mozambique.

Lumpkin, now sixty-eight, has a big, square face. His head is usually topped indoors and out by a brown felt hat with the brim rolled up all the way around. He is missing several fingers from years in the mill. He speaks in a southern accent that sounds almost like Brooklynese (“woik” for *work*). Bea is a slight Jewish woman; their house has matzos in the kitchen and African hangings on the walls. They talk as if the world they have cared about—the labor movement, the steel community—is on the way down.

“The day the plant closed I had my thirty years,” Lumpkin said. “The only thing on my mind was, I’ve been here since 1950, trying to organize this group and that group, and I could look back on thirty years of fruitless work. I was going to leave that plant without accomplishing a single thing for organizing the workers or improving

their situation in any way. That is the only reason I have continued in this struggle—the way human beings are mistreated by the system. They can just be tossed off and forgotten. If we hadn’t organized Save Our Jobs, the whole thing would have been forgotten, because the deal was all set. We wouldn’t have gotten a dime.”

They still have not gotten much more than a dime, but Thomas Geoghegan says that Save Our Jobs has not been as futile as it might seem. “Some things you do as a matter of pride,” he said. “You have to try to keep people from sinking even further in morale. Frank has people out for a whole series of causes. That’s a lot better than guys going into the bar at noon or sitting at home with the oven on to keep warm.”

A BLOCK AND A HALF DOWN SOUTH CHICAGO AVENUE from the Save Our Jobs headquarters sits Hilding Anderson Hall (named for one of the Republic Steel martyrs), home of Local 65 of the United Steelworkers of America. At its height Local 65 was one of the largest locals in the country. It was briefly famous for Edward Sadlowski, a former president, who in 1977 was a thirty-nine-year-old insurgent candidate for the international union presidency. Sadlowski lost in an exceptionally ugly campaign, and, coincidentally, Local 65 began declining at about the same time.

This union local, and much of the South Chicago economy, was long centered on the South Works of U.S. Steel. Eighty-odd years ago, before the U.S. Steel conglomerate was formed, the South Works was one of two great rail-making installations in Chicago, hub of the nation’s expanding railroad network. (The other, known as the North Works, was at the mouth of the Chicago River, in what is now the heart of downtown.) It reached its peak employment during the Second World War, when 16,000 workers turned out metal for ships and tanks. The rail mill rolled its last rail in the 1950s; through the mid-seventies, as the mill concentrated on heavy structural-steel products, its work force dwindled from 10,000 to 7,500.

On March 30 of last year most of the South Works was closed for good. Whether the fundamental cause of the shutdown was the knot of circumstances that make American steel mills uncompetitive, as the company claimed, or simply U.S. Steel’s desire to get out of the steelmaking business and into oil and other pursuits, as most workers believed, there was a large enough component of man-made disaster to leave bitter feelings.

Since the late 1970s steel companies have been either warning or threatening, depending on your perspective, that they would be closing plants unless they got certain concessions. In the case of the South Works, U.S. Steel was asking the state government for relief from pollution laws and sales taxes and asking the union for more-flexible work rules. If those conditions were met, the company said, it would bring new hope to the South Works by investing \$225 million in a new rail mill.

The union and the State of Illinois did their part. Then the company announced that it was having second thoughts. If the city government really wanted to keep the South Works in Chicago, it should help out the company with additional tax breaks. The city, too, complied. In that case, said the company, there would have to be yet another change in union work rules, which would allow the company to hire outside, non-union contractors for much of the work inside the plant. At that point the union leadership said "Enough." U.S. Steel, apparently relieved, announced that plans for the rail mill were being canceled and the venerable South Works would be closed. R. C. Longworth, a careful and normally calm reporter, wrote of this decision:

U.S. Steel lied to the workers, to the State of Illinois, and to the South Side neighborhood where South Works stands. It said it planned to expand operations there with the rail mill, but it is clear now that the company never had any such plans. It toyed with the workers, many of whom gave decades of their lives to U.S. Steel. And when it finally opened the trap door under them, it had the gall to claim that it was the workers' fault.

On the afternoon of March 30, 1984, the mill's last day of operation, a funeral cortege formed in South Chicago. Shortly after three o'clock some sixty automobiles gathered at the Local 65 union hall. The drivers turned on their headlights, displayed orange FUNERAL stickers on their windshields, and drove in stately procession to the South Works gates. The guard inspected each badge and let them pass. Once inside, they pulled up beside the towering furnaces, parked, and stared for a while. Many of the cars were draped with purple crepe and carried signs: MACHINE SHOP REST IN PEACE, WELDING SHOP REST IN PEACE. The drivers were mainly twenty-five- and thirty-year men, part of the generation that had left South Chicago for Korea or even Normandy and Okinawa and then come home to work in the mills. Starting in the late 1970s their sons and nephews had been laid off. Now their jobs were going too.

The men talked quietly among themselves, but every few minutes one of them would walk over to a locked shop door and self-consciously proclaim to the other members of the procession, as if mimicking TV news reports of other plant closings, "I put thirty-one years of my life into this building! Do you know what that means?" A flatbed truck rumbled past, carrying what appeared to be the disassembled components of a large crane. "That's our work," said a former boilermaker, one of the few men in his thirties. "There it goes! The thing of it is, we can beat the shops they're sending it to."

Later that evening, after the procession had left the South Works and driven with horns blaring through the streets of South Chicago, a wake was held at the union hall. Perhaps a thousand steelworkers and their families were there, along with a handful of supervisors who had started out as union men, instantly recognizable in their cardigan sweaters and dress slacks (instead of nylon jackets

and work pants). Even off duty there is a dress code in industrial communities. One after another the steelworkers went up to the microphone to choke out their sentiments about what had been lost. But in addition to the laments that might be heard at any wake, there was another note. *Hold on*, many of the speakers said, in the face of all evidence. *Things are bound to turn around.*

That vain hope was precisely what many of the workers clung to—even though the company was urging them to take severance pay, acceptance of which meant forfeiting their right to some hypothetical future recall, and even though the dwindling membership of Local 65 had only the night before met to discuss the distasteful necessity of selling the union hall. The loss of income was bad, but that was only part of the story. It was almost impossible to face the fact that the mighty South Works, which had given such predictability to life on the South Side for so many decades, was gone.

ED SADLOWSKI, THE ONETIME REFORM CANDIDATE who is now a United Steelworkers official based at the Local 65 hall, gave me a tour of the landscape that was being transformed. We drove to the southern edge of Lake Michigan, where ice floes from the 300 miles of lake to the north had been piled up by the wind. To the left, across the lake and in the distance, the skyscrapers of the Loop reared up. To the right were the factories of Hammond and Gary. All around us were industrial canals and boarded-up houses and smokestacks with nothing coming out of them. The wind picked up a fine gray grit from the slag heaps that surrounded the steel mills. In the deserted yards at Wisconsin Steel sat hundreds of ingots and metal pieces, now rusted red. The only men at work were operating a bulldozer in a slag heap, reshaping the great dunes of grit. This, Sadlowski said, was home.

Sadlowski is a paunchy man with a dark mop of hair. He is in his mid-forties but, like many industrial workers, looks ten years older. He has the outgoing air of a natural charmer and storyteller. Born in South Chicago, within blocks of the South Works, he quit school at seventeen, joined the Army, and came back to the mill. He threw himself into union politics, becoming president of Local 65 when he was twenty-five and rising through the hierarchy until he ran for the international presidency. His principal error, as is so often the case in politics, was to utter an inconvenient truth: he said in a *Penthouse* magazine interview that he didn't think people were meant to work in smelters and hoped the day would come when they didn't have to. The Walter Mondales and Gerald Fords of the world can, when defeated, retire in comfort to the law firm or the lecture circuit. The Ed Sadlowskis cannot. Although he is still a power in Chicago, Sadlowski clearly misses his glory days as a national figure. He seems to be a man caught in one world but yearning for another. He has persevered in night school, completing his college degree and recently his master's.

"Nothing much has changed here during my lifetime," Sadlowski said, as we drove through the lines of bungalows abutting the steel mills. "Except maybe the blight is a little worse. Even when it was new it was never exactly in the travel guide. It was strictly a working-stiff mill community. You'll find houses like this wherever you find steel mills or coal mines."

We passed through the downtown of South Chicago, where Sadlowski grew up. "The house I was born in was right there. I can't show it to you, because it fell down. The sucker just fell down, boom!" He pointed to a growing Hispanic section, where a Mexican restaurant and a kielbasa stand, both with the look of decay, sit near each other. "This is the most highly industrialized neighborhood in the world, the richest in terms of industry. But look at it. We've got all kinds of big factories. We should have some big libraries and hospitals, too—but where are they? That tells me that they've taken and taken from this community and never put back."

To the steelworkers of South Chicago everything about the "new" economy is bad. They see the movement of jobs to the American Southwest or to Taiwan as just another way to undercut the workingman's wage. Few of them see a way to adapt to the new order. Why should they even think of moving? Everyone has a story about the friend or nephew who drove to Houston or Denver, found himself stacking bottles at the 7-Eleven or competing with illegal Mexican immigrants for construction jobs, and drove back home. Even if they wanted to, how could they move when their assets are tied up in houses no one wants to buy? The only hope is to ride things out, endure as they endured at the mill, and wait for the government to come to its senses and step in. Someday the politicians will realize that we have bridges to repair and steelworkers dying for a chance to make bridge girders. Someday they'll find the guts to crack down on the Japanese. Someday they'll change the tax laws—or recognize that the welfare of a community is too important to be determined by marginal-profit calculations by the boys in green eyeshades. Until then there's nothing to do but organize and wait.

It may not matter to the steelworkers whether their miseries are omens of wider suffering or isolated misfortunes, typical of nothing. Either way, the steelworkers still feel stuck. But that distinction is precisely what matters to everyone else.

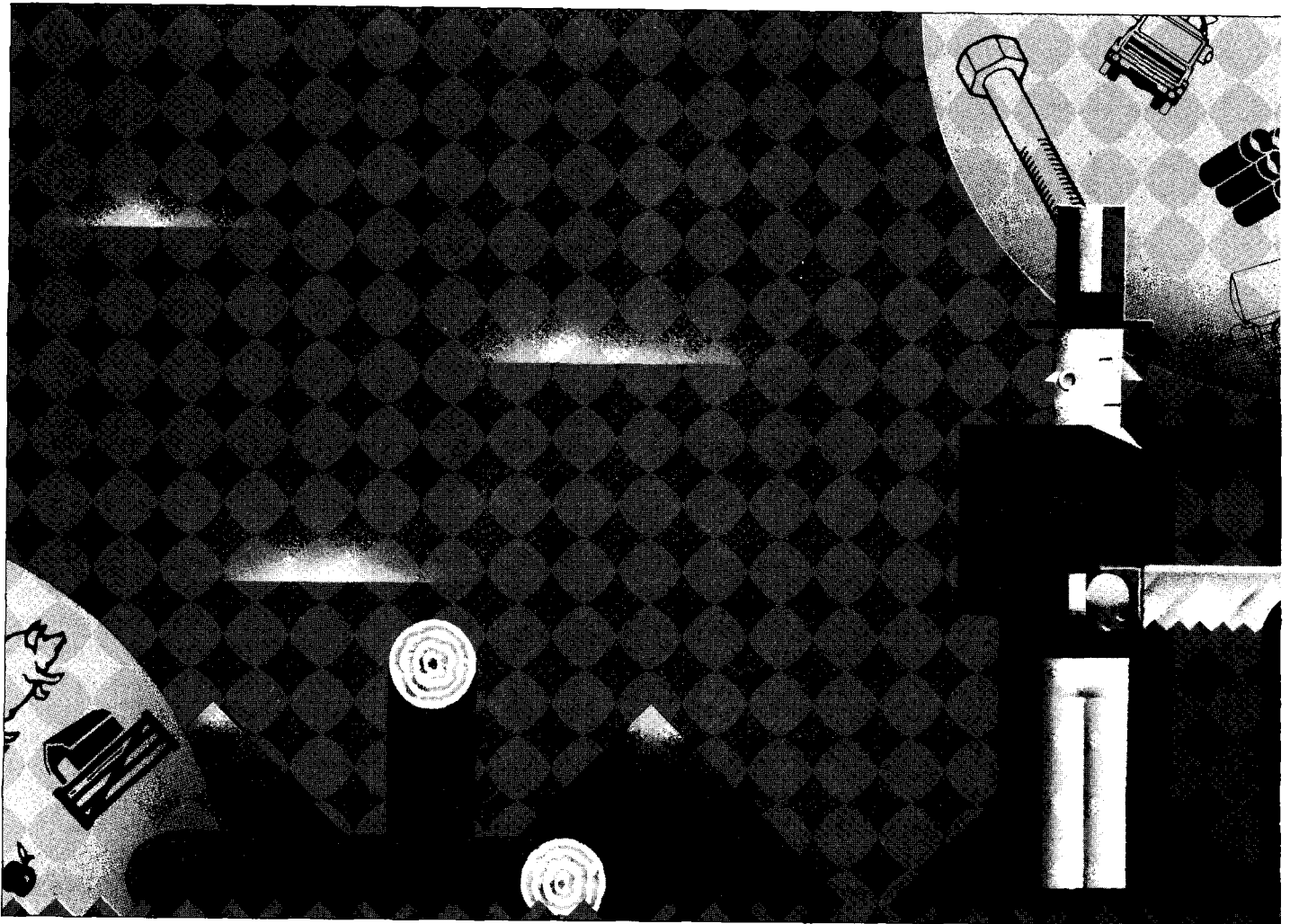
TO START UNTANGLING THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE current economic transformation, it is helpful to appreciate the curious role played by "productivity." In most economic discussions the word is shorthand for "labor productivity"—the amount of corn or cars or coronary-bypass operations produced per man-hour. A high and steadily increasing rate of productivity is, of course, one of the elements that makes the U.S. economy different from Ghana's; it is the source of higher wages, higher profits, lower prices, and other blessings. But when

productivity rises, the change inherently eliminates some work that people used to do, whether as milkmaids or welders. Thus a more productive economy can be wonderful in the abstract and threatening in the concrete. This accounts for a strange schizophrenia in public warnings about productivity. Economists worriedly contrast America's recent modest growth in productivity with the robust gains of the Japanese and ask, How can we keep up? Meanwhile, labor spokesmen, describing the same economy in the same anxious tones, say that productivity is increasing *too fast* and that robots are putting too many people out of work. Because nearly every productive innovation has disrupted someone's business, nearly every innovation has initially been opposed.

Theoretically, these perspectives might be reconciled with each other. It is conceivable that productivity could be stagnant in general—thereby slowly depleting the economic base—but rising quickly in certain industries, thereby discomfiting the work force. But in practice, the two perspectives on productivity hint at disagreements about almost every other economic issue. Those who think productivity is too low view the American economy, for better or worse, as inextricably bound up in international competition, its options constrained by what the Japanese and the Koreans do. Those who think productivity is too high believe that the fact that technology makes something possible or the market makes it attractive is not a good enough reason to rend our social fabric.

The most unrefined version of the anti-productivity argument is that technology will lower wages and put people out of work. This is sometimes referred to as the "lump of labor" concept—the idea that there is a certain amount of work to be done, and if machines do it, people can't. It is possible to find in American history some apparent confirmation of this view—for example, in the saga of the American farm.

A hundred and fifty years ago nearly three quarters of the working people in this country worked on farms. By the turn of the century, even after the great manufacturing centers had risen and immigrants had filled the eastern cities, farmers made up more than one third of the work force, and on the eve of the Second World War about one fourth of the American population still lived on the farm. By the beginning of the 1980s only one fortieth did. Clearly, automation "destroyed" many farm jobs. But if technology were really eliminating work, we would expect all those displaced farmers to be unemployed. Some of them were, especially the blacks who moved from southern farms to northern and western cities between 1940 and 1960, in the largest migration of a single group in American history. Their experience has been different from that of other migrant groups, mainly because of discrimination at both ends of the journey. But the reason most ex-farmers, black and white, are not unemployed is that jobs were being created in the cities as they were being eliminated on the farms. (Indeed, most historians contend that people were pulled from the farm by the lure of city jobs, rather

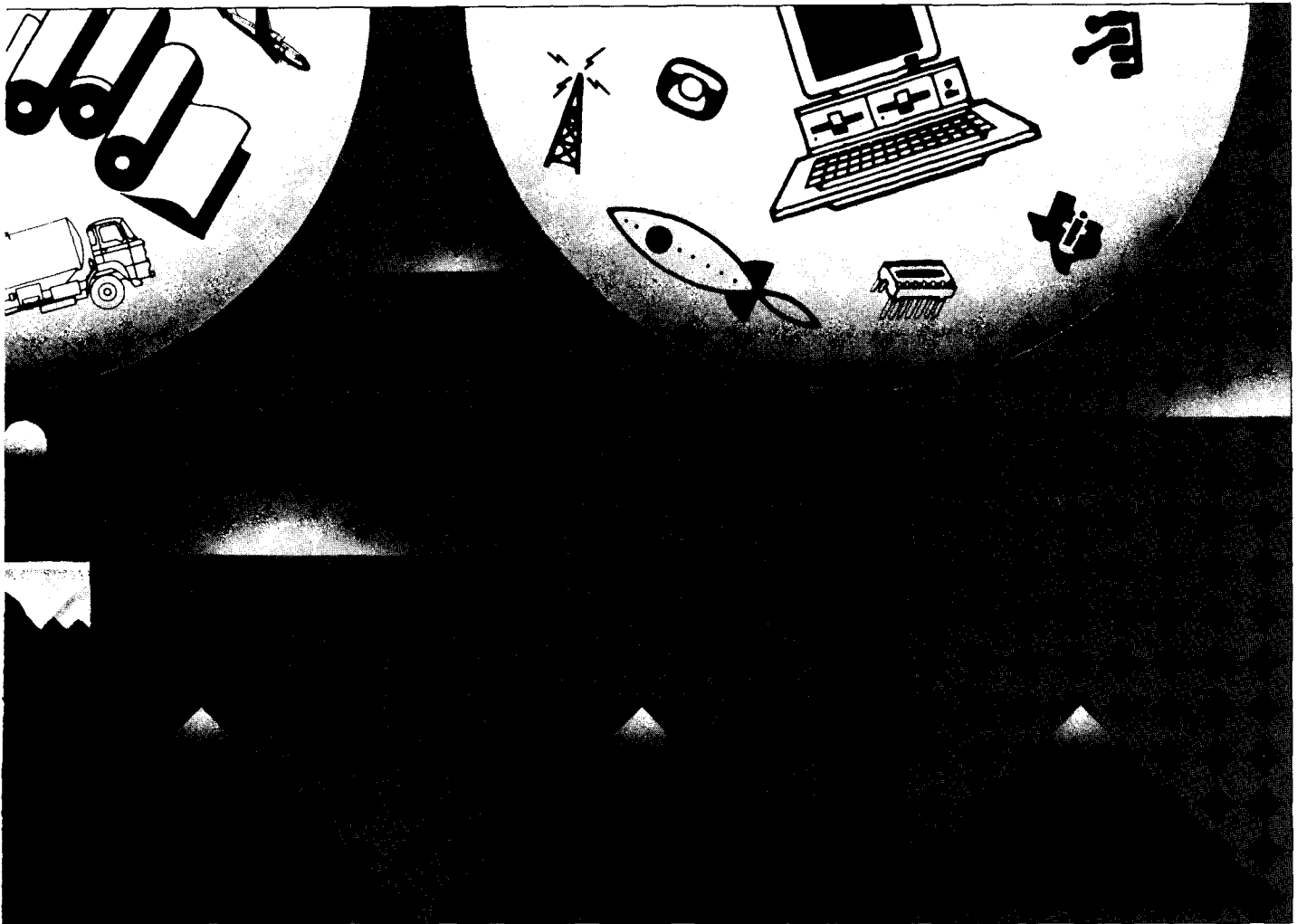


than pushed off by combines and electric churns.) Two thirds of all the jobs that existed in the industrialized nations a hundred years ago have been “eliminated,” but three times as many people are at work. The United States is more automated than before, but a larger proportion of its people are employed than at any other point in its history.

The lump-of-labor argument reached its zenith twenty years ago, during the great automation controversy. The worry at that time was that productivity had become a self-accelerating, unstoppable force, which could ultimately put most of the population out of work. Through the late 1950s unemployment had been stuck at what were then considered dangerously high rates—6.8 percent during the recession year of 1958, a peak of 7.1 percent in May, 1961, and never less than 5.5 percent as late as 1963. Could it be an accident that so many millions were shut out of work when productivity rates were relentlessly ratchetting upward? From 1850 to 1889 output per man-hour rose by 1.3 percent a year. From 1889 to 1919 it rose by 2 percent. For the next twenty years it rose by 2.5 percent, and from 1947 to 1960 it rose by 3.3 percent. In the first few years of the 1960s it rose by 3.6 percent. Where would it end?

A man named John Snyder, the president of a robot-making company, told a congressional committee investigating the problem in 1963 that automation was eliminating 40,000 jobs each week—or two million a year, at a time when the total work force was less than 75 million. Several economists warned that it was vain to think that increases in consumption could ever catch up with increases in production. Charles Killingsworth, of Michigan State University, a renowned automation expert, soberly told the same congressional committee that 99.5 percent of homes with electricity already had refrigerators, 93 percent had televisions, and 83 percent had washing machines. What more could they be expected to buy? “The only sharply rising sales curve in the consumer-durables field today is that of the electric can-opener industry,” he reported.

Congress passed the Manpower Development and Training Act in 1962 to cope with the menace of automation. Even after it was passed, in the mid-1960s there were predictions that the numbers of steelworkers, auto workers, telephone operators, and even IRS agents were destined for permanent decline. Most menacing of all, it appeared that manufacturing employment in general was headed the same way. Robert Theobald, part of a briefly influential anti-automation group called the Ad Hoc Com-



mittee on the Triple Revolution, wrote in 1961: "Despite the continuing increase in manufacturing, the number of people employed in this field appears to have reached a peak, at least in the United States. Total employment in the manufacturing industries was 17,500,000 at the height of the 1953-54 boom, 17,100,000 at the height of the 1956-57 boom, and only 16,500,000 at the height of the 1959-60 boom."

If a million manufacturing jobs had disappeared in six years, by extrapolation it seemed reasonable that automation might drive the manufacturing work force below 15 million in the 1960s and below 14 million in the 1970s, just when the Baby Boom generation would be looking for jobs.

As it turned out, the frightening predictions were wrong—and not by some small margin but completely and monumentally. In 1980 total manufacturing employment was higher than ever before in American history. The number had begun to rise in the early sixties. The first increase, after years of stagnation in the 1950s, seemed significant enough to be pronounced by *Fortune* "one of the most sensational pieces of news" in years and to become the basis for a long *Fortune* series debunking the automation threat. Manufacturing employment reached 19.3 million in 1967, 19.6 million in 1977, and 20.6 million

in 1980. (By 1982 it had fallen by about a million and a half, but that was in the middle of the most severe recession in forty years.)

The same was true in many specific industries affected by automation. In 1961 a writer named Walter Buckingham warned, "There are 160,000 unemployed in Detroit who will probably never go back to making automobiles, partly because the industry is past its peak of growth and partly because automation has taken their jobs." But by 1978 the American auto industry employed more people than it ever had before. The number of telephone operators nearly doubled between 1940 and 1970, despite the elimination of the "Hello, Central!" dialing system, before falling by a quarter during the 1970s, with the advent of computerized switching. The number of machinists—skilled and well-paid craftsmen who operate metal-working equipment—dipped during the 1960s but rose during the 1970s, even though more and more shops were adopting "numerically controlled" (computer-operated) machine tools. All the while, the machinists' average wage was also increasing. So were the nation's per capita income (except when depressed by OPEC), the skill and education levels of its work force, its employment totals, and most other indicators of its economic well-being.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE AUTOMATION PERIL? WHY did the predictions look so silly so soon after they were issued? The answer does not seem to lie in one commonsense notion about automation—that people who lost their jobs to computers or robots might have found new jobs making computers or robots. (Employment in those industries rose very little.) Part of the pessimists' error may have been their touching but mistaken faith that mankind's material wants had now been satisfied and any additional production would lie unclaimed upon the market. (Many of you will read these words in houses lacking electric can-openers but containing computers, telephone-answering machines, video-cassette recorders, microwave ovens, and other items that Professor Killingsworth never dreamed people might buy.) In the early sixties, as at other times, there was a strong temptation to declare the technological universe complete: all those old discoveries, the airplanes and automobiles and telephones, may have been great, but there's nothing else in the pipeline.

Even more, the automation scare revealed that the rate of productivity affected employment less than something else did. That something was the overall rise and fall of the economy.

In retrospect, it seems that manufacturing employment had slumbered during the late 1950s not because of new automated devices but because of austerity measures promoted by the Eisenhower Administration, which was determined not to relive the horror of 1958, when the federal deficit had soared to the now quaint sum of \$10 billion. During the boom of the mid-1960s the American economy found work for millions of new workers, each of them more productive than previous workers, because the level of demand was so high. The government did its part, by pumping up the economy (and starting a war), and the labor unions helped, by bidding up wages and sustaining a mass market. But automation itself also contributed to growth, by driving down prices and creating new markets. The force that was most feared helped propel the United States through a decade of unprecedented prosperity.

THE LUMP-OF-LABOR IDEA DOES NOT HAVE A LARGE following these days, but its underlying premise—that the *next* wave of economic change will be destructive, whatever the previous ones may have been—is central to the warnings about a deindustrialized society. The best exponents of the deindustrialization theory, including Barry Bluestone, of Boston College, claim that while international competition and a higher-tech economy may not cost America jobs in the aggregate, they will take away America's "good" jobs in the places where Americans already happen to live.

The background to this argument is the change in the world's economic landscape in the past fifteen years. Immediately after the Second World War the United States enjoyed a crushing economic advantage because its pro-

ductive machinery was more modern than anyone else's (and had not been bombed). But by the early 1970s the forces that would eventually destroy South Chicago were being set in motion around the world. As investment capital became more mobile, companies were freer to shop for locations with lower wages and better "business climates," whether in Tennessee or Taiwan. The oil-price increases engineered by OPEC in 1973, and the resulting inflation, reduced the standard of living for most Americans—but not for workers in the heavy industries, whose unions had negotiated the cost-of-living adjustments known as COLAS. This was a temporary advantage for them and a long-term disaster for their industries. During the late 1970s, when chronic inflation eroded the dollar's value in international trade, American goods became artificially attractive to foreign buyers—and American manufacturers were lulled into an artificial sense of security about their ability to compete. They were not prepared to adapt when circumstances changed in the early 1980s and an overvalued dollar drove their foreign customers away. The American steel industry had made matters worse with its "list price" system, which was essentially a legalized price-

THE PHOTOGRAPH

Black as a crow's wing was what they said
about my mother's hair. Even now,
back home, someone on the street
will stop me to recall my mother, how beautiful she was,
first among her sisters.
In the photograph, her hair
is a spill of ink below the white beret,
a swell of dark water. And her eyes as dark,
her chin lifted, that brusque defining posture
she had just begun in her defense.
Seventeen, on her own,
still a shadow in my father's longing—nothing
the camera could record foretold
her restlessness, the years of shrill
unspecified despair, the clear reproach
of *my* life, just beginning.

The horseshoe hung in the neck of the tree sinks
deeper into heartwood every season.
Sometimes I hear the past
hum in my ear, its cruel perfected music,
as I turn from the stove
or stop to braid my daughter's thick black hair.

—Ellen Bryant Voigt

fixing scheme. By disdaining to undercut each other's prices American steel companies practically invited an attack by foreign producers who would compete on price. Soon steel was in trouble, and to many people it appeared that America was doomed to lose its manufacturing base.

The threat to manufacturing is what most worries the deindustrialization spokesmen, because they see a vast distinction between the manufacturing and service sectors of the economy. In a sense the difference is merely symbolic: nearly 70 percent of employed Americans work in service industries, and services have employed more people than manufacturing for at least a hundred years. Nonetheless, manufacturing employment retains tremendous economic, political, and emotional significance.

The jobs that America is losing, according to Barry Bluestone, the AFL-CIO, and many other sources, are the unionized, secure, well-paying manufacturing jobs that offered a chance to ambitious workers (and built support for a liberal political movement). The jobs that America is gaining, they say, are bad jobs—the non-unionized, high-turnover, ill-paying, no-future jobs in the service industries and in high tech. The service sector, including psychiatrists and laundry clerks, funeral directors and teamsters, is at least as diverse as manufacturing, but for political purposes it has been summed up by the 7-Eleven and McDonald's. If there is one widely accepted symbol of today's changing economy, the 1980s version of the allegorical Joad family hitting the road during the Depression, it is the proud steelworker who gets laid off in Youngstown and is reduced to flipping burgers for one-fifth his former wage. His is said to be more than an individual tragedy, for in his downfall lie the beginnings of a "two-tier" society and the destruction of the middle class.

The effect of this change, it is argued, is not simply to drag wages down but to distort the income distribution. There will be more rich doctors and more poor janitors, and fewer \$12- to \$15-an-hour auto workers who can afford a house, their union dues, and a boat. This is a vision of a United States with all the egalitarianism and economic justice of Manhattan.

Until recently most discussions of the impending two-tier economy dwelt on seemingly irrefutable evidence from the Census Bureau, which showed that the United States took a sharp turn toward inequity in the late 1970s. Through most of the decade, according to these reports, about half of all families—50.4 percent—fell into the broad "middle class" range, with incomes between \$15,000 and \$35,000 (in 1982 dollars). About a quarter of all families were in the bottom bracket (24.5 percent with incomes below \$15,000) and the other quarter in the top (25 percent with incomes over \$35,000). But as the 1980s began, according to these figures, the middle class was dramatically depleted. It dropped all at once to 43.9 percent. Of the 6.5 percent of American families who were pushed out, the majority went up, as the top bracket swelled to contain 30.9 percent of the population. The rest moved down, into a bottom tier that contained 25.1 per-

cent of all families. "By almost all measures, the degree of income inequality between rich and poor American families has been increasing," *Fortune* magazine said in 1983, in an article that focused sharply on the Census findings and helped publicize the "shrinking middle" concept.

If all these developments have, in fact, occurred, then the United States should be doing something about them. It could start by recognizing that there can be no such thing as "free trade" in a world where nations are competing for scarce work. Through tariffs or quotas or "domestic-content" laws the United States should do what it takes to protect its manufacturing jobs. The government should also recognize that "capital mobility"—factory closings in some cities, new factories elsewhere—can destroy regions, families, and the very fabric of society. Therefore, the movement of capital should be slowed down, with plant-closing restrictions, public ownership, and other efforts to keep Youngstown's jobs in Youngstown. Clear in the knowledge that the natural course of events is toward disaster, the government should attempt to steer investment toward industries that will produce "good" jobs and preserve community roots.

These steps might seem sensible if the country were deindustrializing and a two-tier society were emerging. But is this happening? I think the evidence is that it is not. There are good reasons to believe that today's economic change is very much like past changes that the United States has undergone—and therefore to conclude that it will create many more opportunities than it destroys.

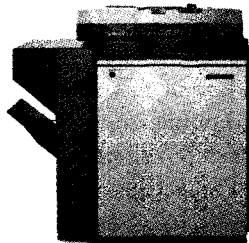
TO BEGIN WITH, CONSIDER THE PUTATIVE ECLIPSE OF American manufacturing. Robert Z. Lawrence, an economist from the Brookings Institution and the author of *Can America Compete?*, is as prominent an opponent of the deindustrialization theory as Bluestone is a proponent, and he asserts that the United States is in no imminent danger of vanishing as a manufacturing power. "Judged by the volume of production, America is no more a service economy today than it was in 1960," he has said. "Goods output was 45.6 percent of GNP in 1960, 45.8 percent in 1979, and 45.3 percent in the final quarter of 1983." There is a grave threat to American manufacturing, Lawrence and others have argued, but it arises principally from the overvalued American dollar, which makes foreign goods so cheap and American exports so dear.

A smaller share of the population works in manufacturing now than in 1960, of course; but precisely because the service sector is already so large and manufacturing so small, the prospects for a dramatic swing in employment are remote. Many of the jobs that are going to disappear from manufacturing have already disappeared. Moreover, steel and auto workers, symbolically evocative as their cases may be, are extremely misleading guides to the overall difference between manufacturing and service jobs.

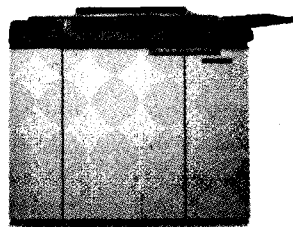
Robert Samuelson, of *Newsweek*, has pointed out that the steel and auto industries accounted for only 2.2 per-



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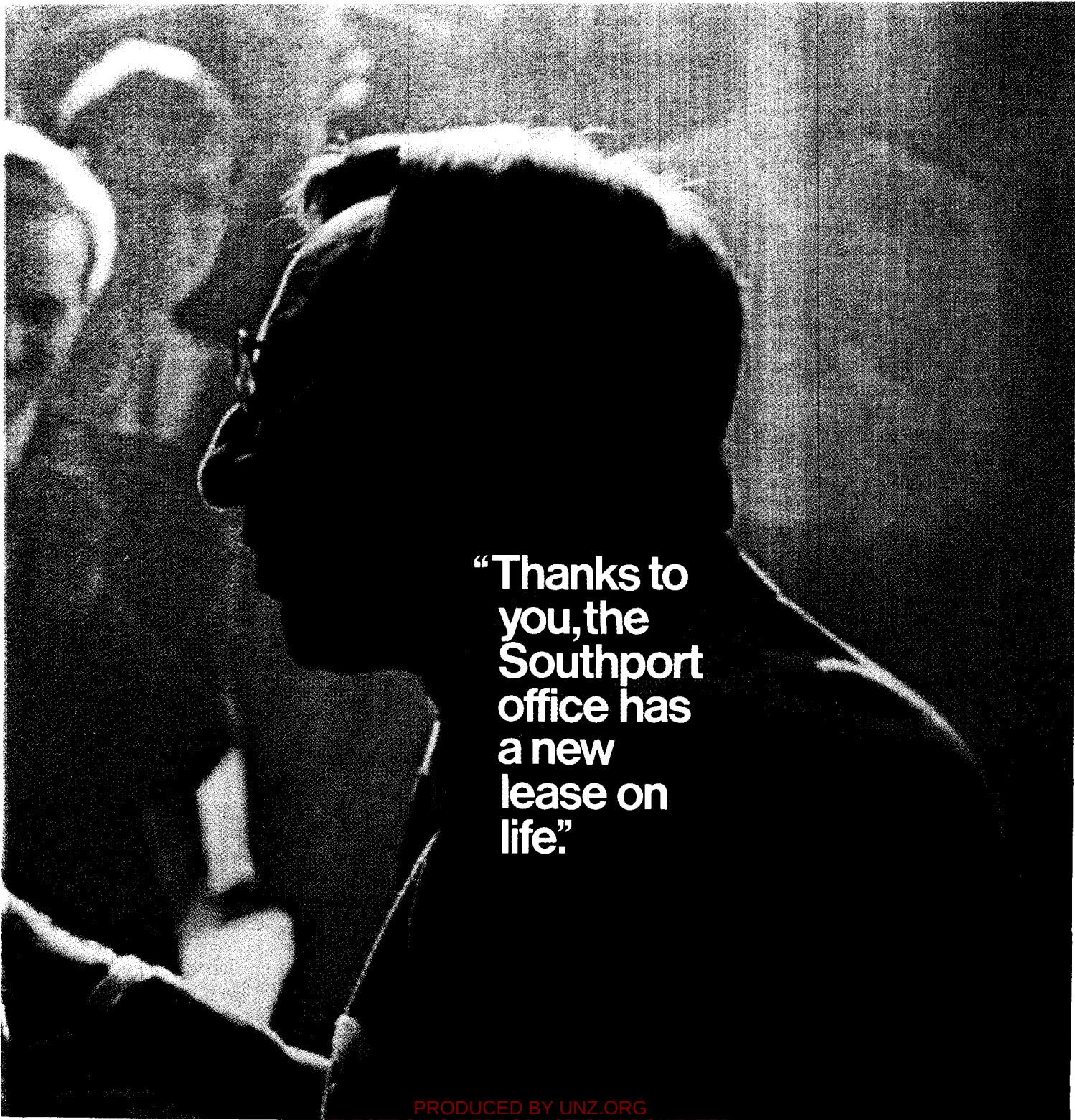
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cent of American employment as long ago as 1950, and only 1.5 percent in 1979, when the recent decline began. Textile and apparel workers, among the worst-paid manufacturing employees, are more numerous than steel and auto workers combined. Leaving aside their limited numbers, steel and auto workers are unusual in their relative affluence. Samuelson reports that in 1970 steelworkers, as part of the traditional aristocracy of labor, had average hourly earnings 29 percent higher than those for all nonsupervisory workers in the economy. By 1980 steelworkers were earning 71 percent more than other workers. During the same period auto workers' earnings rose from 31 percent higher than the average to 48 percent higher.

If steel or auto workers were typical, we might expect the state with the highest proportion of manufacturing workers to be Ohio or Illinois or Pennsylvania—the bulwarks of the old industrial belt. In fact, as Robert Samuelson has shown, not one of them is among the top ten states when ranked by proportion of the work force in manufacturing. Number one on that list is North Carolina, home to low-wage furniture factories and textile mills, with 32.8 percent of its non-farm work force employed in manufacturing. North Carolina stands thirty-ninth among the fifty states in per capita income. Number two on the manufacturing list is South Carolina, with 30.6 percent of its work force in manufacturing. It has the forty-eighth highest per capita income in the country. Indeed, the only states in the top ten in manufacturing that are in the top twenty in per capita income are Connecticut (fifth in manufacturing, second in income) and New Hampshire (sixth in manufacturing, nineteenth in income). All the other states in the top twenty in manufacturing are in the bottom thirty in per capita income.

If manufacturing were the main source of opportunity, we might expect the growth of a service-heavy Sun Belt boomtown like Houston to drive wages and income down. But from 1977 to 1982 Houston went from fifth in per capita income among large metropolitan areas to third—and this at a time when migrants were pouring in, which usually depresses per capita income. Meanwhile, Chicago was falling from third to ninth, Detroit from fourth to four-

teenth, Cleveland from eleventh to sixteenth, and St. Louis from sixteenth to seventeenth. For many people, entering the service sector represents an important step up, not down. According to Michael Urquhart, of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), in a study published in *Monthly Labor Review*, most of those entering service jobs were not displaced manufacturing workers but people (mainly women) who had previously not been employed at all.

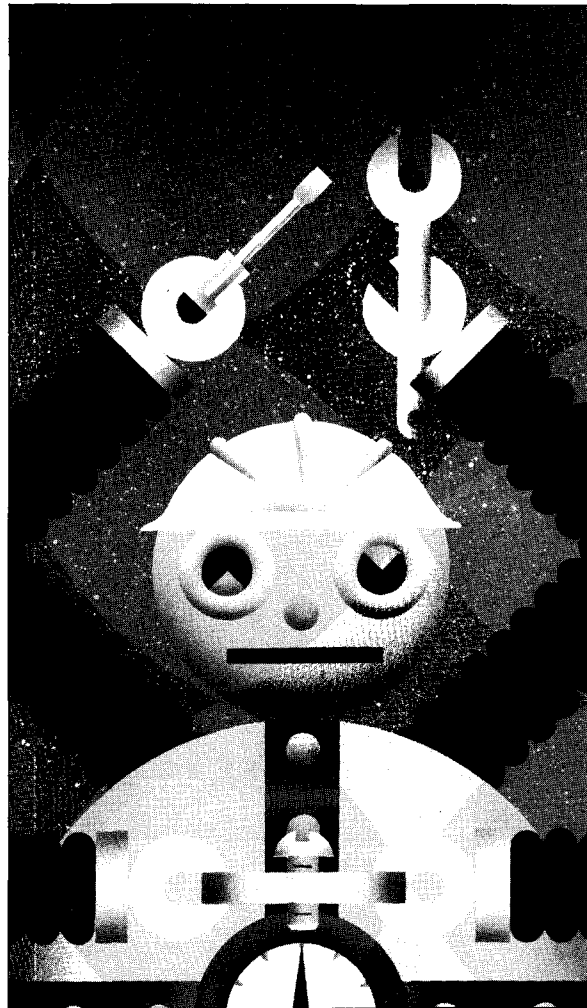
A year ago the BLS released its forecasts for employment growth by 1995. They seemed to confirm the worst predictions about the nature of a high-tech and service

economy. The single job category with the most new openings expected was building custodians, the number of which is expected to increase by 779,000 by 1995. Second was cashiers (744,000 new jobs), and third was secretaries (719,000). More glamorous and financially rewarding callings, such as those of registered nurses (sixth; 642,000 new jobs) and computer-systems analysts (twenty-second; 217,000), came farther down the list.

The BLS projections are featured in almost every report about the coming two-tier society. What is less often emphasized is that the United States already has a lot of janitors, cashiers, and secretaries—so many, in fact, that 779,000 new janitors will be just enough to keep the proportion of janitors from *falling*. In 1981 there were 993,000 janitors, and they accounted for 2.8 percent of the work force. In 1995, if the ominous BLS projections are borne out, janitors will constitute 2.8 percent of the work force. The

other fast-growth callings are also expected to remain proportionally stable or increase very slightly. It is one thing to say that a society with so many low-level jobs is unfair. Why not say that outright, instead of pretending that an *increase* in the number of janitors is the cause of worry?

One of the most dramatic changes during the 1970s was the decline in "private household workers"—the maids, cleaning ladies, servants, and nannies who are nearly all female and disproportionately black. The number of "cleaners and servants" fell by nearly one third between 1972 and 1980, the number of in-house child-care workers by one fifth. Maybe it's hard to find good help these days,



and maybe some of the lost jobs have merely been transferred to illegal immigrants; but can there be any more hopeful sign of progress out of "bad" jobs than the shrinkage of this category?

The most exhaustive forecast of the impact of automation on the future labor market comes from Wassily Leontief and Faye Duchin, of New York University, who put the eighty-nine industrial sectors and fifty-three occupations that make up the U.S. economy through the computerized input-output models that won Leontief the Nobel Prize. The study is often cited in deindustrialization arguments; Leontief has warned that the United States will need shorter work weeks and new forms of job-sharing to cope with automation. But the data in the study point in a different direction. All in all, the study concludes that by the year 2000 computerized automation will allow the United States to produce goods and services with 10 percent fewer workers than it would need to produce the same amount of goods without computers. This is not exactly a surprising finding, when you consider that the study rested on the assumption that the level of "final demand" in the year 2000 was fixed—that is, it explicitly ignored the possibility that technical progress would create new markets for new products. (The study did allow for possible increases in business investment, which could create new jobs.)

This omission aside, what did the study say about the jobs America would be losing? The charts for the fifty-three occupations show that computers will *increase* demand for most of them and reduce it significantly only for secretaries, office-machine operators, bank tellers, other clerical workers, phone operators, drafters, and managers and proprietors. With the exception of the last, these are not America's "best" jobs. "The impacts . . . will involve a significant increase in professionals as a proportion of the labor force and a steep decline in the relative number of clerical workers," the report's summary said. "Production workers can be expected to maintain their share of the labor force; direct displacement . . . will, at least in the initial stages, be offset by the increased investment demand for all sorts of capital goods, especially computers." These are developments to be feared?

IF MANUFACTURING IS NOT REALLY DECLINING, AND IF most manufacturing workers are not paid that well anyway, and if fast-growing cities offer rising incomes, and if the occupational structure is stable or improving, then why did the middle class suddenly shrink in the late 1970s? The answer is, it didn't. An honest but important statistical error lay behind that Census report. Robert Samuelson carefully dissected it more than a year ago in the *National Journal*, but his analysis never seemed to catch up with the fast-moving "fact."

According to most published interpretations of the Census report, fully 10 percent of American households dropped out of the middle-income group in 1979. Shifts

that sudden rarely occur in normal times; what really happened was a change in statistical practices. Before 1979 the Census Bureau had reported no subdivisions within the \$25,000-to-\$50,000 income bracket. In 1979 it began using a more finely graduated system, with brackets for \$37,500 to \$40,000, and so forth. But then the Census had to determine how to reclassify the people who in surveys made before 1979 had been simply lumped together in the \$25,000-to-\$50,000 category. One way to do so would have been to run all the original Census tapes back through the computers, but that would have been time-consuming and expensive, and there was no reason to think it was necessary. The bureau had a well-established routine for estimating income distribution by fitting the data to statistical curves, and the results were usually correct. And so the Census analysts came up with informed guesses about where families had probably fallen within the \$25,000-to-\$50,000 range before 1979. It was when those approximated historical figures were compared with the post-1979 results that the difference between the two seemed to indicate a shrinking middle class. Robert Samuelson noticed the sharp change in 1979, suspected that something other than natural economic forces must lie behind it, and found out about the estimation procedure from the Census. Then Frank Levy, of the University of Maryland, and Richard Michel, of the Urban Institute, obtained the original tapes and ran them through their computer. On re-examination the tapes showed that the distribution of earnings had been remarkably constant through the years.

Barry Bluestone now concedes that the two-tier society is still a hypothetical danger. "There may not be much evidence of a 'bimodal distribution' of income yet," he told me last summer, shortly after he and Robert Lawrence had faced each other down before a congressional committee. "But remember that a bimodal pattern"—one with most people at the extremes and few in the middle—"would be a revolutionary change. It is almost a fact of nature to have unimodal distributions. *Any* movement in this direction suggests a revolution in economics."

Robert Lawrence, who generally debunks the idea of a two-tier society, does not dispute that recently the fastest-growing job categories have been in the lower-paying sectors. But he says there is a more obvious explanation than a historic shift toward a two-tier society.

The explanation is the Baby Boom. During the 1970s millions of new workers entered the labor market. The American economy managed to find work for most of them, to the astonishment of the many European nations where unemployment among the young is a major worry. They did not land many of the "good" jobs in heavy industry; the seniority rules that are sacred to unionized operations kept young workers out of slow-growing industries like autos and steel. Instead they found work through the growth of lower-paying industries. Fifteen years ago, as members of the Baby Boom were beginning to get out of college or come home from the Army, men under age twenty-five earned on average three-quarters as much as

men over twenty-five. By 1983 the younger men were earning about half as much as the older ones.

If there really is a “shrinking middle,” then, it is a phenomenon limited to young men. For working women over twenty-five the past fifteen years have meant not a shrinking middle but a “shrinking bottom,” as their incomes have come closer to men’s and they have been pushed out of the low earnings bracket and into the middle range. Meanwhile, older men have been moving from the middle to the top. “The evidence suggests that shifts in the labor-force distribution across *age groups* rather than sectors are a more important reason for the declining middle,” Robert Lawrence says. The reason this explanation matters is that, according to economists, such demographically induced distortions tend to cure themselves as an unusually large generation ages.

There is another obvious explanation for the growth in the number of low-wage jobs: as in so many other recent economic misfortunes, OPEC played its part. For two centuries before 1973 the American economy had raised labor productivity (and therefore wages) by using energy as if it were free. When energy suddenly became expensive, businesses had to concentrate on raising “energy productivity”—getting the most out of a barrel of oil or a kilowatt of power, even if it meant doing more work by hand. The jobs this entailed (installing insulation, stripping paint off jetliners to increase their mileage) were relatively “unproductive” and low-paid; but with stable energy prices it should be possible to raise labor productivity again. Taking into account OPEC and the Baby Boom, says Donald Hicks, of the University of Texas at Dallas, “a case can be made that, if anything, our national economy has shown a remarkable agility in responding to all manner of disturbances since 1965.”

TRYING AS THE RECENT DISTURBANCES HAVE BEEN, Hicks says, the United States has surmounted far worse. “You can’t tell me that the movement of people off the farm did not have a greater impact than anything that may be going on now,” he says, “—or Henry Ford, or the decline of the textile factories.” Each of those episodes was disruptive, yet each was part of the process that produced the communities that people are now trying to save. The life that Frank Lumpkin and Ed Sadlowski mourn was, after all, built by people who came from Poland or Florida looking for new opportunities.

If that is so, what accounts for the note of falling-off-the-brink to be found in so many descriptions of the evolving economy? I am not talking about the wrath that is justly directed toward the International Harvesters of the world for callously tossing off the Frank Lumpkins, or about the tax-code insanities that tempt firms to close factories that are still paying their way. I mean instead the insistence that as certain industries decline and others emerge, nothing good can possibly come of the transition, and that the pain is all that matters. I think this outlook has less to do with

the nitty-gritty of facts than with heartfelt assumptions about stability and change. In particular it reflects a romantic amnesia about how American society has evolved.

If only Bruce Springsteen had written his song “My Hometown” a few years earlier, it could have been paired with the Carter *Urban America* report as the yin and yang of views about community stability. The song says that the factories are closing down; it is about the pathos of seeing places you have cared about weaken and die. But through most of American history the factories have constantly been closing down—and opening up—and people have been moving from declining areas to those on the rise. Capitalism is one of the world’s more disruptive forces. It can call every social arrangement into question, make cities and skills and ranks merely temporary. To buy into it is to make a commitment to permanent revolution that few political creeds can match. Accepting that commitment has made the United States different from other countries in several ways: it is more open to immigrants and to the socially unfavored, it is more prosperous, and it is more atomized and rootless. Other nations have struck a different bargain with capitalism. England, for example, is more stable, less prosperous, more bound by class. The American bargain is responsible not simply for what is painful in our society but also for what is promising.

Both the Northeast and the upper Midwest, now taken as symbols of stable communities unchanging through the eons, in fact illustrate how tumultuous American life has always been. Consider the case of nineteenth-century Poughkeepsie, New York, which has been studied by Clyde Griffen, of Vassar. In the years before the Civil War the city enjoyed a boom in beer-making. As a result there was also a boom in cooperage (barrel-making), and from 1850 to 1860 the number of coopers in Poughkeepsie quadrupled. New firms sprang up; master coopers went into business for themselves; wage rates soared. But in the mid-1860s demand started to fall. By 1870 the total number of coopers was only slightly higher than it had been in 1860, and by 1880 it was actually lower. Wages also fell, and by 1875 coopers, who had mastered the skill of making watertight barrels by precisely fitting the slats, were earning about as much as common day laborers.

What did the coopers do? The younger ones left and found other work elsewhere, and the older ones stayed. A similar fate came to Poughkeepsie’s cabinetmakers, not because of slack demand but because of the dawn of mass production. The younger cabinetmakers moved away, and the older ones did well for a time, but the firms that kept paying them their accustomed wage finally went out of business. There was nothing atypical about any of this. “For two centuries different groups of skilled artisans have faced technological changes that have made their skills less valuable than they were,” Stephan Thernstrom, of Harvard, said last summer. “Their choices were to remain and make half the wages that they used to or to move to some other place, away from the mainstream, where their skills might be more valuable.”

In his book *Poverty and Progress*, a classic study of nineteenth-century Newburyport, Massachusetts, Thernstrom emphasizes the same constant churning of people from place to place. Early in the nineteenth century the city suffered economic misfortunes at least as distressing as anything that has befallen South Chicago. For twenty years, from 1810 to 1830, people moved out of Newburyport, and the town fell apart. Most of those who left during the nineteenth century, Thernstrom found, were laborers and artisans. Those who stayed were the ones who could afford to, the merchants and bankers. The same was true in Poughkeepsie. According to Griffen's study, from one decennial U.S. Census to the next, most of the upper class of the city could be found in place, but the working class was always on the road. "Skilled craftsmen moved in and out of the city very frequently. Of the fourteen trades . . . in only one—cabinetmaking between 1850 and 1860 [the true boom years]—did as many as half the workers remain between censuses. . . . Two thirds or more of the younger workers in nine of the fourteen crafts in 1850 departed during the next decade." Many of them ended up on the frontier, where they could gain property of their own or sell their skills at a premium. After the Second World War the connection between class and propensity to migrate was reversed. The recent movement toward the Sun Belt has been led not by displaced laborers but by better-educated professionals. This is one of the biggest differences between today's migration and that of a hundred years ago.

The industrial Midwest was born of the same migration, tumult, and economic change that are now said to threaten it. Nearly fifty years ago an economist named Glenn E. McLaughlin wrote a book called *Growth of American Manufacturing Areas*. It came out during the Depression, but it focused on the astonishing growth of American manufacturing power between 1899 and 1929. America's population was growing fast then, largely through immigration, and the number of manufacturing workers was growing almost 50 percent faster. Where was the growth concentrated? In the region that the Census Bureau calls East North Central, and that others now refer to as the Rust Belt.

The book depicted the nation's thirty-three industrial areas, the fast-growing, prosperous places where industry was moving in. With three exceptions, on the West Coast (Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle), they were all in the Northeast and the upper Midwest. Toledo, Scranton, Dayton, St. Louis, Youngstown, Detroit, Chicago—these were the upstart areas of America, the places that offered immigrants from Poland, Tennessee, Italy, and Georgia wages and opportunities they could not have found at home. Not even Houston in the 1970s grew so rapidly as Cleveland and Detroit did after the turn of the century. From 1900 to 1930 Detroit's population quintupled. In their rise, these new powers elbowed more-settled cities, and their products and jobs, out of the way. "Among areas, Boston and Albany have suffered much from these changes," McLaughlin said. "Up to 1919 Chicago"—including its steelmaking South Side—"probably profited

more from shifts in industrial activity than any other area." All this happened, of course, after Frederick Jackson Turner declared the frontier "closed" and America's social safety valve eliminated. The United States, it turns out, has continued to have frontiers, which are to be found not in vacant tracts of land but in the social and economic fluidity created by industries on the rise.

Yes, the migration that built the industrial cities was also responsible for some of the most wrenching episodes in American life. When Detroit's population boomed, many of its new citizens were blacks and whites from the South who had left their familiar plots of land in pursuit of Henry Ford's \$5 a day. Even when times were great in the auto industry, the migrants crowded into their row houses and never got over their longing for the comfortable, slow-paced hamlets where they could no longer afford to live. The most notorious migrations of our recent history—the flight of Okies from the Dust Bowl, immortalized by Dorothea Lange's photos and John Steinbeck's (as well as John Ford's) *Grapes of Wrath*, and the exodus of southern blacks to the cities—brought their share of suffering. This was especially so among the blacks, who reached the manufacturing belt just as its growth crested and who are now being left behind in declining cities.

But while American artists have captured the pain of migration, they have not dwelt on its benefits—such chores are left to literal-minded economists. Their studies nearly unanimously conclude that people who pull up stakes fare better than those who stay behind. Indeed, John Kenneth Galbraith has said that migration is the only force that ever breaks the "equilibrium" of regional poverty. Certain people decide they will not be poor anymore, and they leave. Galbraith, himself a migrant from the hardscrabble of rural Canada, was talking mainly about the Third World, but his point seems also to apply to the United States.

For as long as accurate birth records have been kept (since the mid-nineteenth century), the proportion of Americans living outside the region of their birth has been fairly constant ("region" in this sense means one of four large Census Bureau divisions—Northeast, North Central, South, and West). Through the years about one in four Americans has moved to a region other than the one where he was born. Whatever the hardships they have endured, the ones who have moved have found better opportunities than the ones who have stayed put.

"Geographic movement is associated with superior occupational achievement, regardless of place of birth or destination," Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan said in their encyclopedic study *The American Occupational Structure*. "The data unequivocally show that migrants have more successful careers than men still living in the region of their birth. . . . In brief, men who remain in the region in which they were born start their careers on lower levels and advance less subsequently than those who live outside their region of birth. *It appears that something either about migration or about migrants promotes occupational success*" (emphasis added).

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Blau and Duncan went on to try to explain what this "something" might be. "A hypothesis that can explain these findings is that living some distance away from his childhood home frees a man from the restraints and influences his childhood environment imposes on his career." Having broken one social rule by leaving, the migrant is freer to break others. He does not have to marry the girl his family likes or follow his dad into the plant. He is more able to rise—and in theory more likely to fall—without family to call on for spiritual and material help. But in practice, Blau and Duncan found, migrants did not fall—neither the ones who went to Detroit in 1910 nor, for that matter, the ones who left there in 1980.

WHEN I THINK OF THE CASUALTIES OF ECONOMIC change, I think of Frank Lumpkin and the Save Our Jobs Committee. When I think of its beneficiaries, I think of Steve Contreras and Jean Bonner.

Contreras, now in his mid-forties, grew up on the western fringe of San Antonio, within the borders of the Edgewood School District, which is synonymous in Texas with impoverishment. His father was an auto painter; his mother raised the children. San Antonio's Hispanic neighborhoods are as firmly rooted by family ties as any Polish community in Chicago, yet when Contreras finished high school (at a time when more than half of his classmates were dropping out), he left town for Austin and the University of Texas. The state scholarship he had won as the Edgewood valedictorian ran out after a year, and he retreated to San Antonio. In 1963, on the day of his marriage, he moved back to Austin in hopes of completing his degree. Instead he took a job with Tracor, one of the first of the high-tech firms to spring up in Austin, and soon found that his work was more engrossing than his schooling.

It was a "bad" job, by the standards of the two-tier society—a position as a trainee assembler, learning to put electronic parts together, for \$1.75 an hour. It was with a company that, like many in the industry and the area, was vigorously anti-union. But it was the best opportunity Contreras had, and he did not think he would be stuck. After completing the mandatory ninety days as a trainee, he became a regular assembler, then a lead assembler, and then he moved on through a long series of advancements. He became a technician, a senior technician, and the leader of a group of technicians; he went into engineering, became a program engineer, and ended up overseeing subcontractors.

"They were testing me at each stage, but I told them I was putting them to the test," Contreras told me last year. "Would they reward someone with potential?" Having supervised several product lines and worked in sales, he is now Tracor's "facilities services manager," in charge of the architectural, maintenance, and housekeeping crews that keep the plant running day by day.

At that same factory I met Jean Bonner, a large, pleas-

ant-faced black woman who is now fifty years old. She was a teenage mother and had worked as a nursery school teacher at the Greater Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Austin, caring for two- and three-year-olds. She came to the plant in 1964 and found a "bad" job, as a trainee at near minimum wage. Eighteen months later she was the soldering group leader, in charge of twenty-three people. She moved into quality control and eventually became a manufacturing supervisor, presiding over a room full of women fitting electronic chips onto circuit boards. Late last year she was promoted again to assembly manager, overseeing the work of a hundred employees and six product lines. Her earnings approximate those of a steelworker (Contreras's exceed them). Her daughter, now thirty-one, has worked at the same plant for ten years and is a group leader. "When I came to Tracor I came to learn what was here to be done and master it," Bonner said last summer. "My hope for my daughter is that she will be as happy here as I have been."

Stories like these can be hard to take, because of their high saccharin content. The point is that they are true and that they depend on the kind of expansion and adaptability that is very hard to find in settled, declining areas. Yes, Tracor is mainly a defense contractor, so its "opportunities" do not really reflect the workings of the market. But I heard very similar stories in Austin from employees of Motorola, Texas Instruments, and IBM. Perhaps the gains of Contreras and Bonner have come at the expense of mid-western steelworkers, although it is hard to see a direct connection. But aren't the opportunities that got them out of the barrio and away from the usual plight of teenage mothers worth preserving too?

I have seen the same pattern elsewhere in Texas—even in Lubbock, which has in common with South Chicago an unrelenting wind and a major factory layoff. Lubbock is a city of some 220,000, on the treeless high plains of west Texas, where the Panhandle joins the Texas mainland. The skies are often dark with dust storms, and the downtown has that curious East German look of having been built all at the same time, because a tornado erased the old downtown fifteen years ago.

Lubbock was originally a farming and trading center, but in the past decade it has attracted more and more high-tech assembly work. One important installation was the Texas Instruments plant, where TI made its "home" computer, the 99/4A. For a while the city and the company shared high hopes, but in the summer of 1983 both of them faced reality: the computer was a failure, and the Lubbock line was closed. TI tried to transfer many of its career employees elsewhere in the corporation, but at least a thousand people in Lubbock were laid off.

Lubbock's unemployment rate, historically below five percent, shot up to nearly eight. But by the end of 1983 it was already declining, and last spring, nine months after the shutdown, it was 6.2 percent and still headed down.

Why was Lubbock so quick to rebound? TI had created a boomtown situation, and when the boom ended people

moved on to something else. Unlike most boomtowns, Lubbock had a diversified economy—lots of agriculture, some oil work, wholesale trade—but it also had people who expected to keep on the move. I spent several days in Lubbock less than a year after the TI layoff, and I found no pools of unemployed TI workers, waiting for things to pick up at the plant. I did find several for whom TI had been a first step—toward a business of their own, toward a skilled trade, or, at a minimum, out of the sorghum fields. Wayne Finnell, a local banker, said, “These new industries have been picking up the minorities, the Spanish-speakers, and giving them better jobs than they’ve had before. Their fathers may have been picking watermelons, and now they’ve got a chance.”

“MIGRATION, WE have seen, is the oldest action against poverty,” John Kenneth Galbraith wrote in *The Nature of Mass Poverty*. “It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country [or region] to which they go. . . . What is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good?”

This is a more elaborate way of asking Jimmy Carter’s *Urban America* question. Why shouldn’t we help people rather than places? Why should we decide that the whole national history of migration, adjustment, and advancement must now come to an end?

If we had a “people” policy, it would have to come to grips with certain uncomfortable human truths. One is that some—perhaps most—displaced workers will never again be as well off as they used to be. The members of the Save Our Jobs Committee will not be filling the new professional slots that computerization will open up. Some economists might prissily observe that steelworkers have enjoyed above-average earnings for years, so what’s their gripe? The observation is correct, but it is meaningless in South Chicago. It is harder to give something up than not to have had it in the first place. The government cannot give the steelworkers back their jobs, but it should not pretend that they are all going to move to San Jose and do well. It owes them its enforcement powers to keep their former employers from welshing on their pension obligations, and it should alter its depreciation

schedule so that factories are not worth more dead than alive. In certain instances there might even be a case for public-works programs, which could employ people to dismantle the unused industrial eyesores that give their communities such a devastated air and to put up something that for the first time in these communities’ history actually looks nice. Among the many traumas of unemployment is that people who took pride in their work can no longer do so. Offering a dignified outlet for their talents would surely boost their spirits. But in most cases such a boost would prove to be cruel, because of the unavoidable conflict between easing the pain of displaced workers and sending

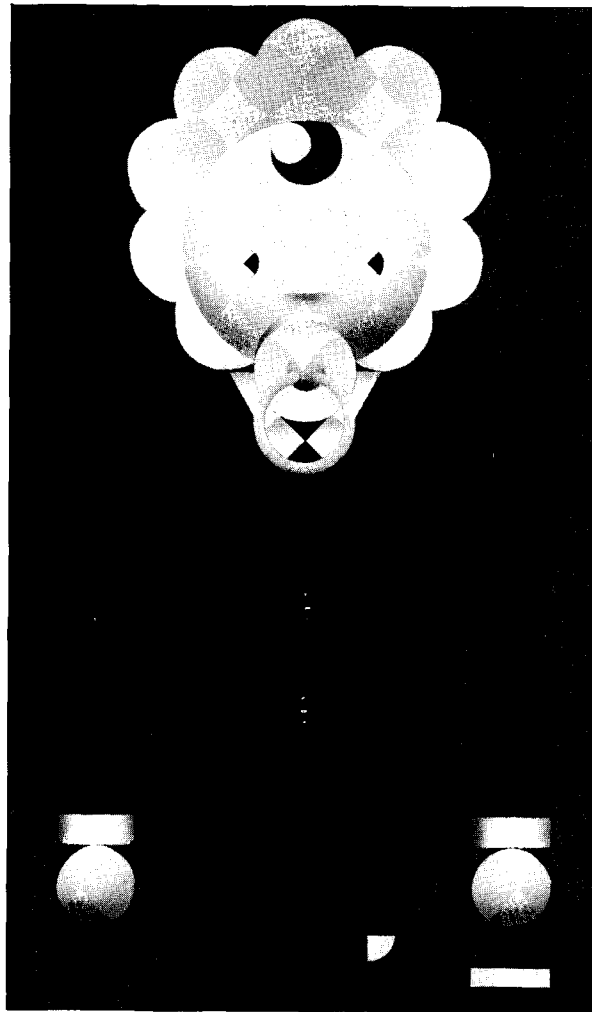
the proper signal to those workers’ children. Frank Lumpkin’s mission is to offer hope to the small group of people who depend on him. The government’s mission should be to make clear that there *is* hope, even though it may not lie within the shadow of the mill.

Another uncomfortable truth is that the culture of the post-war industrial town has a thousand ways to discourage migration. People age early in industrial environments. They are parents at twenty, thinking of their pensions by thirty, old at forty-five. From Houston or Lubbock it might seem that a forty-five-year-old could just throw his family into the car and start all over again. Some forty-five-year-olds do, but for many others it’s too late.

It should be no surprise that long-distance migration has become a white-collar phenomenon: some college graduates can move anywhere and feel at home. Except for family, what they care about—things like jobs and services—can be found nationwide. For many

industrial workers, though, “community” is a much smaller place. It arises from things planted in one physical location—extended family, church, job. How can you go to Texas when Aunt Maria’s seventieth-birthday party is coming up? Thirty years of stability in the steel and auto industries have erased memories of the fathers and grandfathers who moved from somewhere else.

Stephan Thernstrom argues that the nation is smaller for everyone now, steelworkers as well as young lawyers. “The cultural difference between Detroit and Houston is much less than between the farm and the Manchester mills,” he says. “The difference between living in the



Berkshires and living in Lowell was pretty dramatic." Still, a change from Detroit to Houston seems dramatic to those who are considering making it. Everything about industrial life has instilled subordination to large institutions in which collective effort is everything and the individual nothing—the church, the military, the unions, the mills.

I am suggesting not that the government undertake to remold culture but that a "people, not places" policy must be built on an understanding of why "place" matters to so many people. The buccaneers of Dallas and LA speak with withering contempt of the deadheads still stuck in Fort Wayne. But the people who chose to stay are there for a reason, and by their lights it is a noble one.

THERE IS ONE MORE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH, BY far the most difficult to come to grips with. What really matters in the decline of heavy industry is not one generation's lost wage but the eclipse of an important form of economic advancement. In the most familiar version of the American dream the factory worker's son becomes a doctor. But there is another version, in which the steelworker's son becomes a steelworker. The way he moves ahead is through the union, which steadily bids up the wage. The first dream depends for its fulfillment on luck, sacrifice, perseverance, and more luck. The second requires discipline, endurance, a healthy industry to draw on—and the entry ticket, a union card. Since the Second World War that ticket has entitled its bearer to the chance for security. Now, because the heavy industries are floundering, it does not take anyone far.

It is impossible to spend time in Houston or Miami without seeing that opportunities are still available. But they are opportunities of a sort different from those familiar in South Chicago. In part they are the same chances as are held out to any refugee Vietnamese or Guatemalan: to scrimp like crazy for several years and emerge a success. This is a path most native-born Americans disdain. There are also opportunities for those carrying the modern union cards: college or graduate degrees. These credentials are only roughly related to raw intellectual talent, and through much of America's past they were happily ignored. When the Irish moved into police forces and city governments, when Chinese and Jewish immigrants began to thrive in trade, they did not have to prove that they had taken forty hours toward a master's degree. Through much of the nineteenth century, businesses recruited their future executives from among the stock clerks—not because American society was perfectly egalitarian but because no one had thought of using academic degrees as a screening device for any profession except academic ones. Even now the industries growing fastest pay the least attention to credentials. There were few MBAs in the first computer businesses, which were notably indifferent to how long you spent in school and who your grandparents were. But to a growing number of businesses controlling most of the "good" jobs the new union card is indispensable.

The problem with the new union card is that it is distributed even less fairly than the old. If you don't get on the college track in high school, you'll probably never go to college, and if you're born into the wrong family, you may never know of the track at all. If we are serious about expecting people to move toward new opportunities, we must also be serious about removing the barriers that stand in their way. This is why the saga of South Chicago may constitute a strong case for nationwide funding of grade schools and high schools. Why should children be trapped just because they grow up in a city with an eroding tax base? It would be easier to recommend "people, not places" if people in all places had a fairer chance at the start. In addition to federal funding for education, another step in the right direction would be a kind of reverse Individual Retirement Account, through which people could borrow to cover the cost of higher education or specialized training, and then repay a percentage of their future lifetime earnings through the IRS.

Those are some of the hard truths about choosing mobility. No doubt there are many more. But the benefits include a number of things that most Americans value in their society, from its openness to its abundance. Do we really have to believe that the costs have finally become too high and it is time to settle down and be a mature, settled nation, like England or France? We are less likely to do so if we are honest with ourselves about our past.

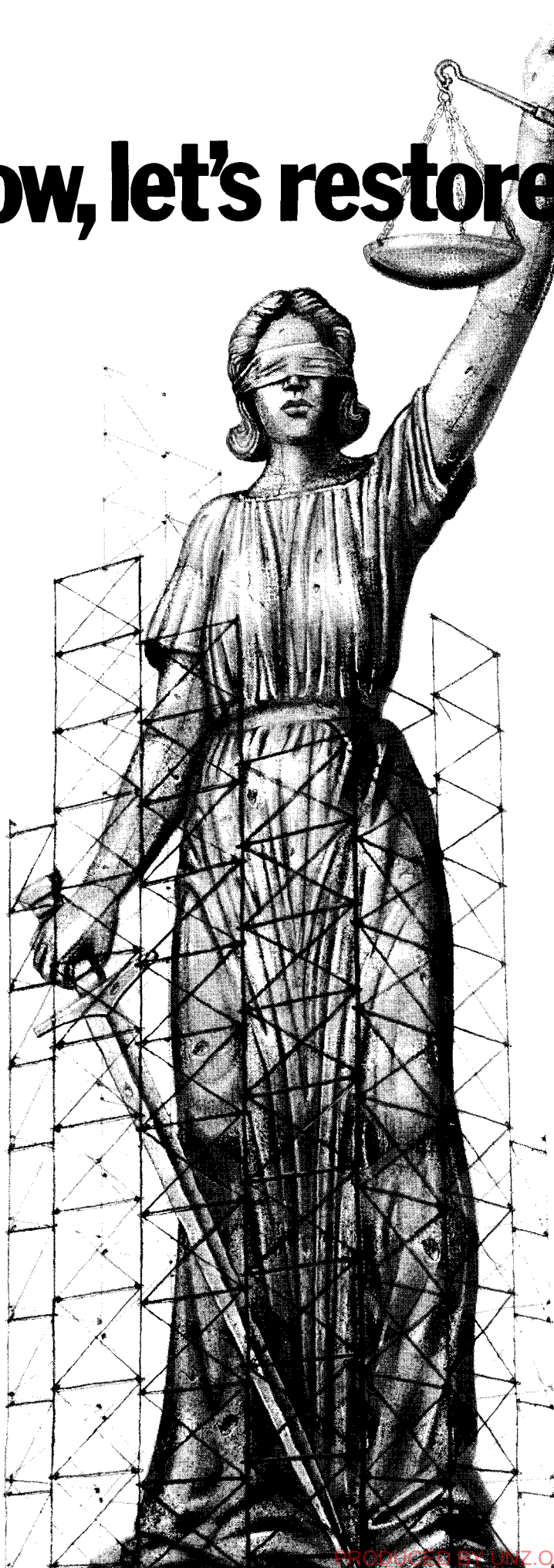
Few people understand this better than Donald Hicks. Hicks grew up in South Bend, Indiana; in December of 1963, on the day the Studebaker plant closed, he was in high school. The city responded to the closing with a campaign to talk up South Bend and attract new business. Hicks watched his friends' families move away.

In 1980, when he was thirty-three years old, Hicks took a leave from his job at the University of Texas in Dallas and came to Washington. There he became the principal author of Jimmy Carter's *Urban America* report. A few weeks after the report was released, with the rain of national outrage still falling upon him, Hicks was summoned with one of his superiors to a "retreat" in Atlantic City. There he was to speak with Brendan Byrne, then the governor of New Jersey, and other state officials. After a congenial dinner Hicks was offered up for dessert.

"The questions were heated," he said recently. "It had touched a nerve. People felt we were attacking something that was very dear to them. What was threatened was their conception of community." One man told Hicks that his grandmother was buried in his hometown in New Jersey and that he could never bear to leave.

"I was being told all this by people whose last names would have been very much at home in Florence or Milan," Hicks said. "They asked me how I dared to tear people away from the roots they had established. I wasn't cheeky enough to say anything then, but it stayed with me. So many of their families had decided to migrate, and they'd found a better life. Now they were angry at the advice that America help others do the same." □

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A Short Story



DOUBLE LIVES

BY SHEILA SCHWARTZ

IN THE MORNING, WHEN NICK GETS UP, I PRETEND TO be asleep. He knows I'm just pretending, but still he makes his steps light as paper, pretending not to wake me as he dresses for work at the hospital. Sometimes I think this means he loves me.

Nick used to be a cat burglar, or so he said. In the small Pennsylvania town where he was raised he practiced in the woods by stalking deer. Sometimes he crept up on smaller, slower game.

One summer he switched to houses. He learned to climb buildings without toeholds, brick homes as smooth and solid as their owners. He would slip inside a third-floor window while the family was downstairs drinking iced tea, complaining about the heat. He would walk through the bedrooms slowly, as if he were invisible, as pure and light as air. He would test the mattresses, open closets, peer into drawers. He would run his hands over the velour towels in the bathroom. He never took anything.

When we first moved to our apartment, he used to climb the furniture, crossing and recrossing the room from bed to dresser to desk to sill to bed again without ever touching earth. Now he handles the room as if it were dynamite. When he dresses for the hospital, he inches open drawers, teases the clothes from their hangers. Even the pens he clips into his white coat pocket don't make a sound. When he kisses me good-bye, I hardly feel it.

This morning, after Nick leaves, I do what I always do—act as if I have somewhere to go. When he comes home this evening, I know that he will ask me, "So, how was it today? Any leads? Any interviews? *Nothing?*" I have been looking for a job ever since we moved here, eight months ago, when Nick began his residency in cardiology at Mount Sinai Hospital. But not many jobs are available for art historians, even in New York, and particularly in my field, which is Impressionism. As I have often told Nick, "Everyone and his brother can tell you why Van Gogh cut off his ear."

Nick doesn't agree. So many museums here. So many art galleries. Even gift shops. Surely somewhere. Why don't I take a course in art therapy? Get another degree.

"It's simple," I say. "I'm not an artist."

Still, for his sake as well as my own I try to wake with a sense of purpose. I buy newspapers. I make phone calls. Every morning I wash my hair and dry it curl by curl by

curl. It's very long, almost to my waist, thick, light brown, or, as Nick described it once when he was brushing it for me, the color of dried thistles. While others have cut theirs short and tough, I've had mine permed. I think this may give me an edge. At least it keeps me from rushing right out at daybreak and finding that I have another whole day to kill.

When I've finished with my hair, I find other things to do: assemble an outfit (scarf, skirt, shoes—everything down to the slip matches). I usually change my mind at least once and start all over again. Scarf, shoes, skirt . . . Sometimes I call Aunt Marge in Vineland and we talk about Uncle Joe.

Whenever he feels sad, he buys a yacht. He has no money, but that doesn't matter. He picks up the yacht in New Jersey and drops it off in Maine, sooner if he gets caught. Usually Aunt Marge receives a call from some stop along the way—Asbury Park, Coney Island. The Coast Guard has found him drifting above the Continental Shelf, his lines trawled out for treasure. Aunt Marge explains; they ship him home; he tells the doctor, who adjusts his lithium, that he had been dreaming of the ocean as it used to be.

Sometimes I want to tell Aunt Marge I think I understand Uncle Joe. I've wanted to steal things myself: someone else's face; an apartment window framing things I'll never have—white shag carpet, peace of mind. Often I roam through the Village looking into windows bright with faraway life.

Always I say to Aunt Marge: "Don't worry. He'll get better. I just know it." Then I hang up, so that I'll have time to clean up the apartment, make it tidy in case Nick returns before I do and gets the idea that I'm slacking off. This morning when I clean up I wonder what his wineglass is doing inside the medicine cabinet. Lately wineglasses have been popping up everywhere. I find them growing like translucent mushrooms under tables and chairs, in corners behind sofas. Last Saturday morning I found one in the laundry bag, mixed in with the socks and sheets. What Nick is hiding I can't tell. He always drinks in front of me, beginning with his pre-run drink when he comes home in the evening, and then all evening long—wine at dinner, beer to cover the hours in front of the TV, whiskey late at night when he thinks I've given up, that I'm asleep. It never seems to change him, this drinking. He is calm. He is pleasant. When I ask him why he needs it he just

Sheila Schwartz teaches writing at Northwestern University.



looks at me. "Need?" he says. "I don't *need* it. I'm a doctor. I know how much my blood can take."

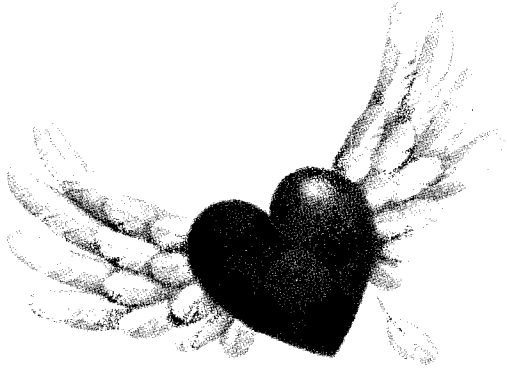
Usually by noon I decide that I'd better get on out there and start living up to my potential. Once in a while I really do have an interview, or I go in search of a particular item I have been planning to buy (thin gold rings that will make my fingers look long and delicate; a special spice, cardamom or rosewater, essential in the preparation of exotic, painstaking dishes, the kind that I can point to and say, "See? This is how I spend my time—for *you*").

More often, however, I spend these hours sitting in Dewey's, drinking coffee and waiting to go home. I sit on one of the stools by the window facing the street and watch

the crowds go by, thinking of all the people I will never meet, of all the things that I will never know. If I were going to have an affair, which one would I choose? That tall one? That fat one? Before I met Nick, I always made decisions of this kind by erotic shorthand. Soccer Legs. Hot Kisses. Pierced Ear. That's the way I remembered them. Nick was the first man who appeared whole to me, indecipherable by any code.

If I wanted an affair, it would be easy. There is always someone interested in passing the sugar, in moving over to the empty stool beside mine so that it's easier to talk. Recently I've been talking to the same man almost every day. He teaches a night class in meteorology at CCNY. His spe-

cialty is snow. He carries around with him, in a black briefcase sectioned off with files, hundreds of snapshots of crystals. Sometimes we sort through them together and pick out the ones we like best. He favors the kind with a lot of points, like stars. I can never make up my mind. Last week he gave me a batch to take with me. "Take all of them," he said. "I have a whole blizzard at home. I'll show you sometime."



EVERY NIGHT AFTER WORK NICK GOES RUNNING. HE strips off his wrinkled hospital clothes and throws them on the floor in the closet. All except the white coat, laden with instruments: stethoscope, reflex hammer, tongue depressors, an elastic tube he uses to bind arms when he takes blood from the veins of his patients. He empties the change from his pockets, hangs the coat on a hook. Then he stands there for a minute, naked, in the closet, as if the rows of pants and shirts are a forest and he is waiting, letting the quiet, vegetable air soothe his skin. Nick has a body like a dancer's, thin and light and clever. He can stand stock still; he can leap over the moon.

When he runs, Nick wears only a pair of white gym shorts and a red bandanna to absorb the sweat, though he never sweats. At the end of a run his skin always looks the same, smooth and brown as polished wood. His smell, too, is constant—bittersweet, a green-tomato smell. He doesn't sweat, neither does he freeze. Even in winter his outfit doesn't change—the same thin shorts, the same bare chest and legs. I tell him he must want to kill himself, that he should know better. He says he likes the feel of the rain or snow against his body, the bits of ash and grit that the wind whirls up from the street. Only once has he ever made a concession. During a blizzard last year, when the snow covered the steps and poles and hydrants, obscured the lines of buildings and turned them into vast white peaks, he wore the scarf I had knitted him for Christmas.

While Nick runs, I prepare dinner. I think of things to say while we eat. It seems odd to have to make conversation with your husband, but after his day, after his run, he is tired. He will answer only simple questions: More peas? Another potato? I try to think of something bright to say, something that will make him look across the table at me and really *look*, the way he used to.

I don't know where Nick goes when he runs. Sometimes he is gone for hours. Sometimes he returns after a few minutes, as tired as if he had run the same distance but in another dimension, double time. I never ask where he's been. I know that running is his time to be alone, away from the demands of the hospital. Everyone needs a quiet, private corner in his life, I tell myself, something untouchable. Still, I want to know. I wonder about his skin when he returns, so smooth, so dry.

Tonight, as on other nights, I follow him. I find my car and pretend I'm going to the store to pick up some forgotten item—cheese, or sugar. But I don't, of course. Instead I drive along slowly behind Nick, watching the white of his shorts flicker through the dusk, between the street-lamps and the passersby.

Nick weaves, though he doesn't have to. The streets are almost empty, but he crisscrosses the sidewalk, leaping over boulders that aren't there. Occasionally he runs up onto the trunk of a car, hops to the roof, and, from the roof, bounds to the trunk of the next car, and so on for a block or more. Behind me drivers honk their horns. I motion that I'm looking for a parking space; they can like it or go to hell.

Sooner or later, I know, he will lose me, turn into some alley, maybe cut through a park. He always does, though never by the same route. Once he escaped me at the Jazz Institute. They were having an outdoor concert; he circled the quartet twice and then disappeared through the back rows of the audience. Another time, he ran through an alley behind a leather bar, down by the docks. The neon sign said CHAIN MALE; I waited for an hour for him to re-emerge, imagining him in pieces, imagining him in ecstasy.

Tonight he runs slowly to the end of the Village and then picks up speed as he turns toward Chinatown and Little Italy. He darts into a pastry shop, one that sells cannoli—vanilla, chocolate, chocolate chip. I go by too quickly to be sure, but I think I catch him in the rearview mirror talking to a girl behind the counter, leaning forward on his arms. "One dozen, please." Is that what he's saying to her? Or simply, "Mmmmmmmmmmm." I picture the girl, sweet and kind and not too round, as girls in pastry shops should be, all dressed in white like a nurse. That delicate way they handle the pastry, I think, must serve them well.

Of course we have no cannoli for dinner, only wine and more wine and silence. I consider telling Nick about an article I read this afternoon while I was waiting for him to come home: "Sexuality After Marriage—Does It Exist?" The article outlined eight possible areas of disagreement between spouses: what each partner wants sexually, how each partner likes to have sex initiated, the degree of sexual variety each partner prefers, appropriate roles, preferred frequency, preferred positions, enhancements, inhibitions. A sidebar in large block print listed barriers to relationships: MISTRUST. INSECURITY. PROJECTION.

I don't really believe a word of this, but I continue to read, because they make the solution seem so simple. You

sit down together one evening and go over the list point by point, noting your faults. Guilty. Guilty. Guilty. You write things down on separate slips of paper and compare them. THINGS WE LIKE: 1) One of us. 2) Both of us. 3) Neither. THINGS WE HATE: 1) Most of the time. 2) Some of the time. 3) On Sundays. Then you trade pieces of paper and make comments, suggestions. When you're all through, you go to it. You find passion again. Again, that falling through warm, dark space.

Nick pours himself more wine.

"So how was work today?"

He sighs. "You know. Angina. Infarctions. Codes. The usual ménage of trouble."

"Ménage?" For some reason I picture goats, lions, cavorting around our living room. I see pastry girls with their clothes off, their skin whitened with a layer of flour as if to keep them from sticking to the floor. Nick glides among them, smooth-limbed, beautiful. His body picks up a light dusting of powder. "Chicken?" I ask him.

He shakes his head. "Thanks."

"More broccoli?"

"Don't think so."

"Where did you go on your run?"

"Nowhere."

"*Nowhere?*"

"You know what I mean. This street. That street. What's the difference?"

"Just curious."

"Don't be," he says. "My life's not that interesting." He has filled his glass halfway, but when he sees me watching him, he tips the bottle again and brings the liquid to the rim. "So how did the job hunt go today? Any leads?"

"Nothing."

"Did you try?"

"Sure I tried. I knocked on the door of every museum."

"Mm-hmm."

"And they all said, 'Go away, little Impressionist. We don't need your kind here. The world is fuzzy enough already.'"

"Oh, Sarah, Sarah, Sarah, Sarah." He lifts his glass very carefully, not spilling a drop, and then bolts the whole thing down, neat, like a shot of whiskey. "Cheers," he says.

"Cheers," I say.

SOMETIMES NICK MAKES LOVE TO ME WHILE WE'RE sleeping; otherwise we don't. In the middle of the night I wake and we are already deeply involved, turning, moaning. I can never tell when this will happen. It has nothing to do with what I'm wearing, or what we've said to each other at dinner, or even how he looks at me before bed. Sometimes when we've gone for days without really speaking I will find him inside me, probing, reaching. I was mugged once in Times Square. A man crept up behind me, put his arms around my waist and hugged me, gently, and then ran away with my purse. It was gone be-

fore I realized he wasn't someone that I knew. When Nick touches me this way, I want to scream. I want to ask him, "Who do you think you are? What do you think this means?" Then I think, well, maybe this is better than nothing. I recede back into the dark, into his arms, the mindless roll of his will.

It's been weeks since we loved even this way, though I've waited every night, my desire outstretched like wings.

Sometimes, like tonight, now, for this, for the way it used to be, I would try anything at all, all the games that once worked, all the things he once loved. I follow him from room to room trying to remind him. "Come on, Nick. We haven't done that in a long time. You used to really like that. It used to be fun, remember? I bought candles. Musk. Lemon. A John Coltrane album. Here. Listen to this."

"Sarah—"

"Wait a minute. Don't say no. Here. Lie back down again. Listen. I'll put it on real soft, like this. It'll relax you. Come on. Lie back. Put your feet in my lap. Why not? Feels nice, huh?"

"Sarah—"

"Okay. Okay. You're not in the mood for that. I understand. Too much running, huh? Enough attention to the feet, right? You need attention elsewhere—okay. Turn over. I'll rub your back—"

"Sarah—"

"No? Okay, fine. We'll just sit here. I'll tell you the story of the water lilies. Not Monet's. *Mine*. Just let me undo my hair. That's better. The water lilies, by your Sarah—"

"Sarah—"

"No! *Listen*. Far away, in the deep, dark earth, the most secret of wonders was planted, deep in the earth, in the dark wet earth where the sun never shines, where no man ever—God, that sounds silly. Here. Put your head in my lap. I'm wearing satin. I know, you see I'm wearing satin, but just feel it. Here. Give me your hand. One touch. One touch only, you always said, drove you right up the wall—"

"Sarah. Please, *please*—"

"Okay, Nick. *Okay*. I understand."

"SO," I ASK THE MAN AT DEWEY'S, "WHAT'S THE forecast for today? Any snow?"

"No snow. Very clear. Unseasonably warm." He grins as he pours sugar into the coffee he has bought for me. Then cream. Then a little more cream.

"That's great," I say.

I haven't asked his name and he hasn't asked mine, but I have learned that he's divorced (five months), that he lives above a delicatessen on the Upper West Side, that he used to date his students but lately he prefers older, more womanly types. He isn't really handsome; he has a big round face, hair that is both too sparse and too fine. But he has an interesting smile, a way of leaning forward when he listens as if sheer good will could shore up a conversation. Today

he tells me that he still loves his ex-wife. She used to rub his back with oil that she warmed first in an egg poacher, then mixed with drops of perfume. Sandalwood. Rose. "That student business never meant a thing," he says. "She shouldn't have taken it so personally. People should never take things like that personally." He smiles. "But what's on *your* mind?" he asks.

Nothing. Nothing is on my mind. I tell him about Uncle Joe, how he is sick again, so soon. The lithium Uncle Joe takes used to last six months or more. "Calm as the sea in September," Aunt Marge would say when I asked how he was doing. Once he had a lucid span that went for almost two years. During that time he built himself a carpenter's bench in the basement and went to work carving wooden ducks. At first he carved the usual flat-eyed, plump-bodied mallards. He painted them black, with rings of military red and green around their necks. All of them looked exactly alike, and he built long rows of shelves to show their sameness. Everyone marveled at the precision of his work. "Isn't it wonderful?" Aunt Marge would whisper, as if saying it too loudly might curse him.

I doubt that's what did it, but sometime after his second quiet winter the birds began to change. The red and green became orange and pink. The bodies he painted purple and turquoise with big red dots all over. He carved them

all out of proportion—elongated, or foreshortened—and put their heads on askew. The faces he made contorted, almost human. Pain. Anger. Fear.

Aunt Marge tried to be gentle. "They're nice, Joey," she would say, "but I liked the others better." Or (brightly), "Why don't you make some of them look happy? Like ducks on a sunny day when the tourists throw them a lot of bread." Or (pleading), "Why can't you make them look normal?" Then she would call me and cry.

Now, I tell the man, Uncle Joe is in the hospital again. This time they caught him right at the Barnegat Inlet, run aground on a low tide. The yacht he'd stolen belonged to the Du Ponts. They were going to sue for damages until they found out he was a habitually crazy man. How he'd run aground was a mystery to both Aunt Marge and me. Uncle Joe was a very good sailor, and even though the inlet was very narrow, he'd been through it many times on previous trips north.

"The Du Ponts! *Jesus*," the man says. "*Un-real*." He throws his head back as if to laugh, but he doesn't laugh. "*Un-real*," he says again. "Like this." He reaches over and touches my hair, takes locks of it between his fingers, gently, and holds it up to the light, fanning it out and letting it drop, fanning it out and letting it drop, softly onto my shoulder right here in the front window of Dewey's. "Like

AN APOLOGY TO A FRIEND FOR SHOOTING A HOLE IN HIS CEILING

My friend, what have I done
against all learning
how the pistol's to be held
and where? Eyes dented,
ears stuffed with sound,
I hold your .22 automatic gone
all of a sudden warm.
Stumbling from the kitchen,
you remember just now the gun
you let me see is loaded.
No, I'm alive, thinking
of Mrs. Beeler, my first-grade teacher,
more incensed by my standing mute,
shoulders hunched, palms out,
than by my crime, until today
I hadn't remembered. I confess.
Moments ago I peered down
the bright vertigo of riflings.
My stomach rolled, my legs went loose
as if I leaned too far
over a high staircase railing,

the red blossom I needed
for luck just out of reach, farther,
until that woman's voice,
"James!" and I teetered footloose
frightened by the clear air,
the ground's chamber beneath me
as dark and heavy as lead.
I heard that voice today, turned
the barrel up and stopped thinking.
My friend, the bullet's safe
in your ceiling. My face stings,
the blasted air a woman's hand
striking me in fear,
in anger for all
my dumbstruck, dangerous knowing.
What can I say, my friend,
so frightened now at being alive
all I can do is shrug.

—James McKean

gold," he says. "Just like gold. Spunnnnnnn." He twirls the hair between his fingers.

"Cut it out."

"Why?"

"Because."

"Because why?" He wraps a long strand of it around his wrist.

"Please."

"Okay." He lets go. "Tell me some more secrets."

When we went to visit Uncle Joe on Sunday, I tell him, Nick ran away again.

"Nick," he interrupts. "Who's that? Your puppy? Your poodle?"

"Nick's my husband." I stress the word *husband*.

"So—surprise, surprise," he says.

"The point is," I tell him, "I can't count on Nick. There we are, visiting my crazy Uncle Joe, and Nick runs off and disappears for hours, doesn't say where the hell he's going, when he's coming back, or anything. It's bad enough I have to sit there and worry about Uncle Joe, who's truly crazy, but I also have to worry about the person who's supposed to be helping me through this ordeal."

"So why worry?" the man says. "Pretty women should never worry." He pats my back as if to reassure me. His hand is warm and heavy, like the hands boys had in junior high school—sweaty, eager.

"Do you really teach school?" I ask.

He laughs. "Of course I do."

I try to laugh too. "Come on. Tell me the truth. Do you really teach meteorology? Who takes meteorology in night school?"

He looks at me. "Hell, I don't know. What's the difference? What if I just happened to like snow? What then? Would you still talk to me?"

"Of course."

"Are you a snob or something?"

"I said, *of course* I would. I was just asking."

"Why?"

I try to switch the subject back to Uncle Joe. "Speaking of weather . . ." I tell him that I tried to talk to Uncle Joe about his latest caper, but his roommate, a paranoid schizophrenic named Tim, kept interrupting us. "Who *are* you?" he asked me. "Who *are* you?" he asked Uncle Joe. "I mean *really*." Tim told us all his theories, about dreams, about witches, about telepathic crime, how 95 percent of all felonies and misdemeanors, violent and otherwise, were caused by bad thoughts transmitted from one person to another by electromagnetic impulse. If people wouldn't think bad thoughts there would be no rape, murder, incest, purse-snatching, arson—especially if the weather stayed bad, because, you see, *contrary to popular belief*, more crimes are committed on clear days. Thoughts travel better when it's dry. Keep an eye on your barometer, he said. When I could get a word in, I asked Uncle Joe, "How is everything here?"

Uncle Joe takes a long time to answer when he's in the hospital. While I was waiting, I tell the man, I wondered

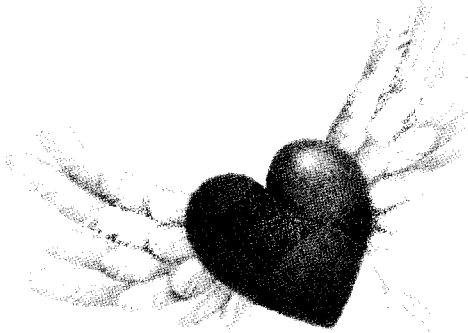
where Nick had gone. Jogging maybe, with a nurse? A whole hour passed. "Uncle Joe?" I said, finally. "Uncle Joe?"

Now the man smiles at me. He puts a warm hand on my older, more womanly knee and gives it a little squeeze. "Sounds like a wild and crazy guy, your uncle. Is your whole family like that?"

I stare at my coffee.

Another little squeeze. "Come on. Tell me what you're thinking about."

"Nick," I say, but it isn't true.



TONIGHT, WHILE I AM WAITING FOR NICK TO COME to bed, I make myself think of other things: what it's like to be Uncle Joe, what it was like when Nick and I first fell in love. It began very gently, at a party at the end of August, in a garden, at night. Roses. Crickets. All that damp midnight grass. Distant blessings of noise and music and smoke drifting past the hedges. It seemed inevitable. We were patients under ether, floating through sounds and lights and colors, the whole world rippling past. We liked it that way. We drove miles to have it. To beaches. And lakes. To the mountains where Nick had grown up, the Blue Ridge and the Tuscarroras. We lay down together in fields, in sand, on wet black earth at the bottom of forests. We covered ourselves with leaves. Climbed fire towers to look out over miles and miles of orchards, dropping apples, pears, onto October hills at twilight. There was no day or night, only us.

I remember it now as something that kept us going; we had to keep going or we would die, go mad. Is that what sends Uncle Joe to the sea, I wonder? Some unanswerable desire? Each year the yachts he steals get bigger. Each year the Coast Guard intercepts him farther from his goal. His hair has turned gray with trying. His skin has roughened. In it I see the stony surface of despair. He is storm-tossed, wild, sorry.

In the other rooms Nick is busy making noise. Clinking glasses. Slamming the refrigerator door, the cabinet doors. Skittering through the stations on the radio. Five seconds of jazz. Ten seconds of flute and harpsichord. A sonata. The excruciating growl and twang of a heavy-metal riff. A chair falls over in the living room. He is drunk, I think. Drunk. Disorderly. And sick of me. I wish he would say it.

Get it over with. That is my seduction tonight. Say it, Nick. Say it.

I try to imagine my life without him. Starting over in winter. I see cold, dark rooms, unused furniture, empty closets, a corner of a bed where I curl up and wait. I wonder how many strangers' hands have fallen on *his* knee, have clutched *his* hair, have dragged *him* under.

Then I hear the front door slam, a heavy oaken thud that whams right through me. I cross the room in time to see Nick in his white shorts and bandanna pass beneath our bedroom window. Snow is falling. He is running through it, trailing silence.

Without thinking I run after him, barefoot, in my nightgown. The checkered marble of the entryway is cold and smooth, the concrete pavement freezing. There is already an inch of snow. Feathery white dust sears my feet.

I try to run anyway. By the time I go back for my robe and slippers and car keys, he will be gone. I watch my prints go down into the snow, count the number of steps I take. One. Two. Three. Four. Flakes whirl into my mouth. Five. Six. Seven. Eight. One hundred. Two hundred. . . . My chest burns. My lungs. Five hundred. I pretend that I am running through sand. Summer sand. Burning hot. Nick is already far away. One block. Two blocks. Turning a corner. A small white blur.

The flakes fall on my arms and hair, teasing me. What color is frostbite? I ask myself. White? Red? Blue? I can't remember. I can feel my feet turning colors, disintegrating. The cold air twists me inside out. Nick is miles away, turning corners, disappearing.

"Hey!" Someone whoops at me from a car. "Crazy lady! Crazy lady in a nightgown! Look at that crazy lady. Hey you, lady. You know it's snowin'?"

I pretend not to hear him. Where is Nick? The streets are empty except for this car moving slowly alongside me, plowing softly through the snow, engine breathing, tires shushing, crunching. "Hey, baby. What is this? Halloween? A striptease? Your mama know you out here like this? You always go runnin' this way?"

I shake my head. Leave me alone. Leave me alone.

Nick is nowhere in sight. I don't know how far I've run, how many corners I've turned, where I lost him. What keeps him immune from the cold? Are we so different? Everything looks far away and tiny. The buildings. The streetlamps. Even the sky looks too small.

"Hey, baby—come on! Get in this car. You get right on in this car. Right on in here. Get warmed up."

"Hey, baby."

"Hey, girl!"

I wave my arms at them. "Go away! Drop dead. Bug off. Shove it up your—"

"Ooooooooooooo-weeeeeeeee! She a nut."

Someone throws a bottle from the car.

Wheels whir.

They drive off.

I continue to run, slower now, much, much slower. So many people behind so many doors. What are they doing

on a night like this? How many are crying? How many are curled together, growing warmer, warmer, warm, letting the whole world spread out distant beyond the grip of their flesh, beyond that hard, eternal shaking? I watch my reflection in the cold, dark windows, shrinking and spreading, the white scarf of my nightgown waving, waving, billowing, flapping, gone. Where would Nick go on a night like this? Which way would the snow pull him? When he runs, is this what he runs for? This pounding, aching, throbbing cold? I look down and see my bare feet moving through snow. They are attached to my legs, but my legs are no longer attached to me. I watch them lifting and falling slower and slower. Prints in the snow. One thousand. Two thousand. Three thousand. I don't know what I'm counting for. I don't know what Nick wants.

I run through the strange, empty streets.

AT 5:45 A.M. A LIGHT GOES ON IN THE CLOSET. NICK is pulling things from hangers. Shirts. Pants. Neckties. A red-and-black-plaid hunting jacket. They fall softly into his hands, one after another, ripe for something.

"What's wrong?" I whisper, but he doesn't hear me. He is dragging a large leather suitcase from the back of the closet, knocking over his ski poles and boots, and then a squash racket that was propped in front of these. They clatter on the wooden floor, but he doesn't even look over to see if the noise has awakened me. Oh, Nick, Nick, Nick, I say to myself. Is this the way you go?

He is tossing shirts one after another into the bottom of the suitcase without folding them. Socks. T-shirts. His bedroom slippers.

Wait, I want to say. This is a joke, isn't it? A practice run? A fire drill? But I am afraid to say anything, afraid that if I open my mouth and scream, it will be real.

When he has finished throwing things into the suitcase, he does another strange thing. He zips it up and jams it in the back of the closet, behind the ski poles and the squash racket. Then he drapes several towels over the poles—a red one, a green, a dark-blue flowered one we used to lie on at the beach. On top of everything he hangs an old sheet. He checks to make sure nothing is showing. Not once has he looked over here to see what I am doing.

What I am doing is this. I am making myself think of other things: Uncle Joe in his chair, in his linoleum-tiled room, in a cold gray haze, saying, "We'll buy a yacht together this time. We'll sail to Oklahoma." The man's hand, how his touch rushed through me like water.

"Are you awake?" Nick says.

"I'm awake."

The air in the room is thick as an ocean. The only light is in the closet. When he turns it out, I think I feel him coming toward me through the darkness, parting waves of it to get to me, but I'm not sure. He will lift me above the waves, I think. We will feel the spray on our faces, I think, but I'm not sure. It's much too dark to tell. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

FRITZ LANG AND DR. JOSEPH GOEBBELS

IT WAS SPRING, 1933, in Berlin, and Hitler was only briefly in the chancellery. Fritz Lang, in striped trousers and morning coat, arrived at the palace on the Wilhelmplatz, now the Ministry for National Enlightenment and Propaganda. Brown-shirted storm troopers were conspicuous, and by the time he was ushered into the large, high-windowed office, Lang was sweating profusely. Facing him was a little man in the uniform (custom made) of the National Socialist Party. Lang, the celebrated movie director of the Weimar Republic, had been summoned by Dr. Joseph Goebbels of the Third Reich.

The interview, Lang assumed, was to chastise him for putting Nazi slogans into the mouth of a psychopath in his just-completed film, *The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse*. But the Herr Doktor was all charm and condescension. A movie fanatic, he saw all Lang's films, although he might, as he did with *Mabuse*, ban them afterward. He had sent for Lang because Hitler admired *Metropolis* and wanted Lang as a sort of Reichsminister of film.

Lang was alarmed. Recently Goebbels had spoken to producers about the need to "re-establish film on a healthy basis," meaning an Aryan one. Lang reminded him of his Jewish ancestry on his mother's side. Goebbels replied that such a drawback might be overlooked. He chatted on while Lang, who had no intention of accepting the post, worried that the bank would close before he could get his money out. (It did.) Released at last, and having promised Goebbels an answer within twenty-four hours, Lang returned home, collected 500 marks and some jewelry, and boarded the night train for Paris. He slit the carpeting of his compartment to hide the money and taped the jewelry to the pipes in the lavatory, retrieving everything once he had crossed the border.

Over the next decade Goebbels developed propaganda into a high art and oversaw nearly every film made in the Reich. Lang, in America, discovered that he had only exchanged Nazi tyranny for that of the Hollywood producer, but given the choice . . . —Nancy Caldwell Sorel

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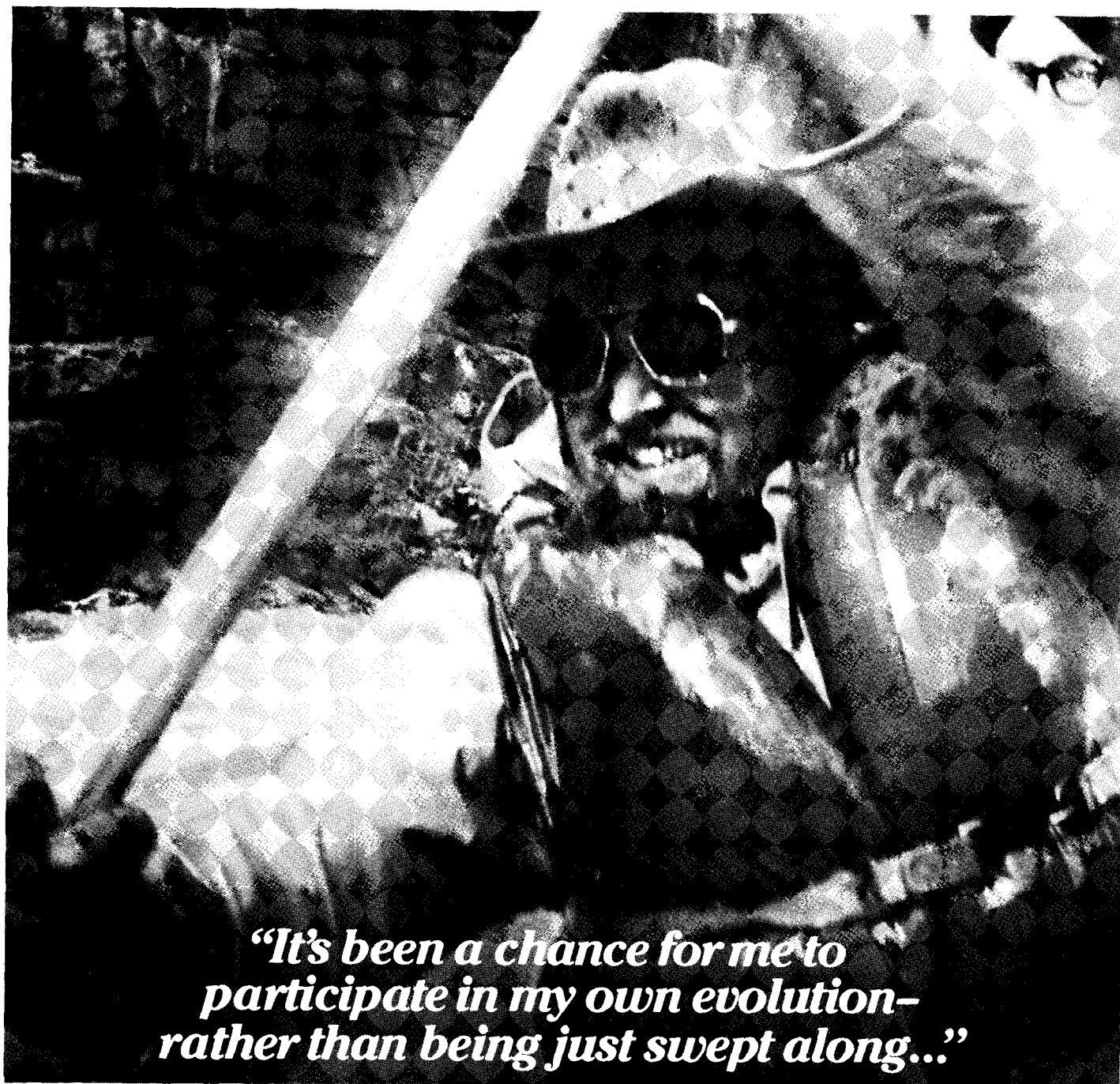
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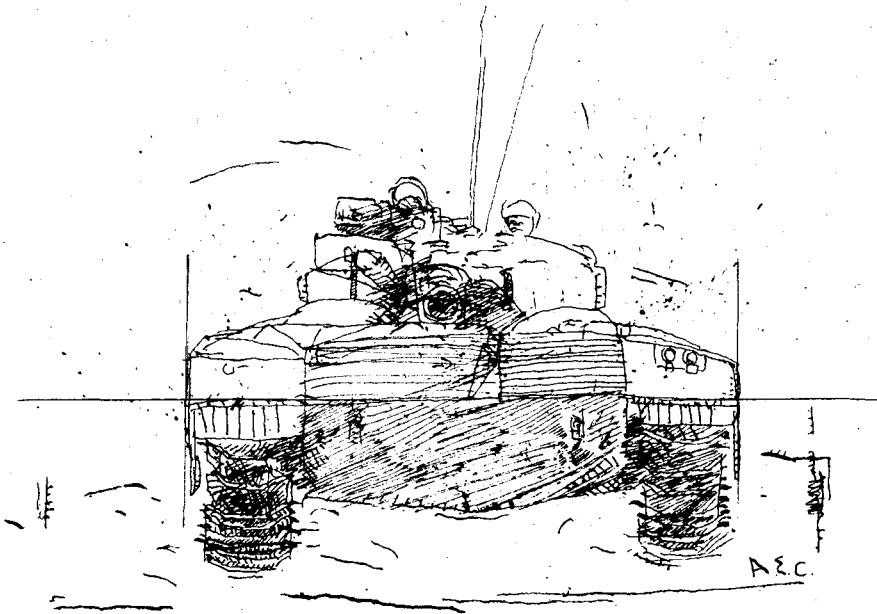
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ISRAEL'S CHARIOT OF FIRE

BY PETER HELLMAN



SHORTLY AFTER DAWN ON JUNE 11, 1982, AS ISRAELI AND Syrian armored forces battled fiercely in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, a twenty-year-old Israeli tank commander fixed in the crosshairs of his telescopic sight an enemy tank he had not expected to see. It was a Russian-built T-72, the newest and best from a nation known for a long line of superior tanks. Though operational since the mid-1970s, the T-72 had never been committed to full-scale war.

Plenty of other Syrian tanks of Russian manufacture had been sent into the first few days of battle in the Bekaa Valley—T-54s, T-55s, and the superb T-62s. But the T-72s, part of Syria's crack Third Armoured Division, had been kept well back, in the environs of Damascus, throughout the early days of the war. Apparently, a column of the tanks had slipped down from the mountains into the valley during the previous night.

The Israeli tank, too, was facing its first war, as a Syrian commander catching sight of his enemy would know from its uniquely sleek profile. It was the Merkava (Hebrew for "chariot"), the first tank ever built in Israel. Its development, during the 1970s, was so secret that few Israelis

knew of it. The odds were against success. No nation so small had ever built a tank on its own.

The prism of the Merkava's laser rangefinder focused a stiletto light on the T-72 and recorded a range of nearly two miles. Making a direct hit on the first shot at that range could be compared to sinking a thirty-five-foot putt. But with a ceasefire, demanded by the superpowers, due at any moment (it actually came at noon), the Israeli commander did not know how much closer he might be authorized to go. He ordered the ammunition loader to lay in a round. The gunner set the digital fire-control system to compute the enemy tank's course, speed, and elevation. From a stovepipe-like sensor sticking up from the turret, the computer automatically received additional inputs for air temperature, pressure, and crosswind. The computer even corrected for any slight curvature of the gun barrel due to temperature variations along its twelve-foot length—an especially important factor when a hot sun heats the top but not the underside. In modern tank warfare a gunner's sharp eye no longer counts for much.

With both hands clasped to the thick, curved handles of his sights, the Israeli commander indented the firing button with his right thumb. Within the gun breech an electrical impulse ignited the propellant packed into a thirty-

Peter Hellman writes often on Israeli affairs.

inch-long brass cartridge shell, sending the projectile with-in on its way. Inside the tank the crew felt almost no recoil. Incised spirals within the barrel imparted a spin to the projectile, improving flight accuracy. It left the muzzle at the almost unimaginable speed of a mile per second. That was as fast as the projectile would go, and as fast as it would need to go.

As soon as it cleared the muzzle, the sabot, or outer casing, of the projectile split in three pieces and fell away. While in the barrel it had provided the tight fit required to maximize acceleration, but once clear it would only slow the projectile. All that remained was a slender tungsten-carbide core some two inches thick and a foot long, with rear fins to help keep it on course. It weighed about fifteen pounds and carried no explosive charge. In the abbreviation-strewn jargon of military technology this type of round is known as an APFSDS ("armor-piercing, fin-stabilized, discarding-sabot") projectile.

As any commander of a modern tank has, the Merkava's commander had his choice among several projectiles. Besides the APFSDS projectile he could have used a HESH ("high-explosive squash-head") round, which splats against a wide surface of the opposing armor, its explosive charge setting off shock waves that cause lethal splintering of the tank's interior walls. Then there is the HEAT ("high-explosive anti-tank") projectile, whose front is a cone lined with copper or some other metal. Upon impact, the explosive payload gasifies the copper and focuses it into a kind of drill that pierces the armor. This is called a shaped charge. Neither a HESH nor a HEAT round, however, can match the range or the power of that simple arrow of heavy metal, which relies on kinetic energy alone for its lethality.

A sharp cracking sound spread to the rocky slopes of the Syrian side of the valley and across to the Shouf Mountains on the Lebanese side, which were dotted with cedars, remnants of ancient groves. The projectile sliced along the fertile valley floor almost on a straight line, never higher than fourteen feet. The temperature in the Bekaa was already in the mid-80s. It passed over fields of watermelon and groves of cherry trees heavy with fruit—the famed sweet dark-red cherries of Lebanon, which had come into season just as Israel had invaded Lebanon. Israeli soldiers ate them incessantly and brought them back home to their families. The soldiers sometimes called this the War of the Cherries.

In a brief burst of yellow-gold light the projectile, still traveling at almost a mile per second, hit the Russian tank. At this speed its impact on a single point of armor can be roughly compared to that of a large truck hitting a steel wall at 60 miles per hour. Rumor had it that the Russians had devised a new, impenetrable armor for the T-72. But rumor was wrong. The projectile pierced one layer of armor after another, splintering the hardened steel as easily as if it were wood. As the dense tungsten-alloy projectile entered the crew compartment, it burst into dozens, perhaps hundreds, of particles. In the open each of these particles could fly in a single direction until its energy was

expended. Here they ricocheted over and over against the inside walls of the tank. A single particle might pass through a human body several times at different angles. Any crew member exposed to this firestorm of shredded metal has little chance of surviving, even before fires start and ammunition explodes.

In one stroke the Merkava came of age. For the first time, a T-72 had been destroyed by cannon fire from another tank. Before the end of the war Merkavas would destroy at least eight more T-72s, in this and in two other encounters.

The Merkava did not emerge from the war unscathed. The army command in Tel Aviv refuses to release exact figures, but it does not deny that some of its prize new tanks were lost to well-planned Syrian ambushes. Others were stopped by anti-tank missiles fired from the ground and, in the newest twist in anti-armor warfare, from French-made Gazelle helicopters. But in tank-to-tank warfare the Merkava was supreme.

What is perhaps most astonishing about the Merkava is that in a country often chastised for its comatose bureaucracy it was developed speedily and cheaply by a government agency—a quasi-civilian arm of the defense ministry called the Tank Development Authority. For the bureaucrats in charge, the Merkava has perhaps been too much of a success. They fear that their role as prime contractor may one day be shifted to a private, tax-paying firm. In a switch from the usual assumed failure of government as entrepreneur, Tank Authority executives insist that they can do the job better. "Each time a private contractor signs a contract with a subcontractor," explains a tank-production manager, "specifications become frozen. But in our own shops we make continuous changes as required from the field. Our people never have to dicker over how much it will cost. They just do it as fast as they can." The Merkava promises to be a major export item once Israel's own needs are met. At \$1.6 million, it would be the least expensive tank of its class on the market. "This tank is overweight, undergunned, and too slow," says Lieutenant Colonel Donald Shive, an armor specialist at the Pentagon. "Even so, it is one of the world's best tanks."

THE WAR OF ARMOR IN LEBANON, WITH MORE THAN 1,000 tanks committed by Israel and Syria, demonstrated that the tank remains the primary weapon of conventional land warfare. Nothing compares to it as a source of mobile, protected firepower. The nightly television footage of Israeli aircraft attacking Beirut in the summer of 1982 only emphasized the role of the tank: the jets bombed their targets with fine-honed accuracy, enveloping the city in fire and smoke, but the Palestine Liberation Organization was still there, firing back. The lesson was clear. Even when air power is immense, it cannot drive out, let alone destroy, a well-entrenched enemy. That job has to be spearheaded by commando units and by tanks, taking possession of the earth under their treads.

"The strength of the tank," writes the great British weapons authority Richard Simpkin, "lies in its ability to be most things to most commanders—eyes to one, a warning finger to another, a mailed fist to a third and a bastion to a fourth." If non-nuclear NATO and Warsaw Pact forces ever fight a war in Europe, the victor will almost certainly be the side whose tanks perform best.

The tank was a British invention from the First World War, devoted to a single mission: to advance on the static German defense lines in northern France. It was developed to flatten thick coils of barbed wire, fend off machine-gun fire, and, finally, rumble over the previously inviolable trenches, crushing any enemy soldiers who had not already fled. In short, the tank was to do what great waves of infantrymen had failed to do, even as they were slaughtered in ghastly numbers: break the stalemate of trench warfare.

Those first ungainly rhomboids ("Tank" was a British code word for the secret project; the prototype was nicknamed "Mother") did what was asked of them at the Somme, on September 15, 1916. A brigade of improved British tanks, 475 strong, broke the German line again at Cambrai, on November 20, 1917. The tank was seen by most strategists as simply an opener of holes through which cavalry and infantry could pour to do the real work. As late as 1925 Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig went so far as to predict that "as time goes on you will find just as much use for the horse, the well-bred horse, as you have ever done in the past." That sentiment was put to rest by the German blitzkrieg into Poland in September of 1939, when the Pomorska brigade of cavalry attacked an onrushing wedge of German tanks, with predictably cruel results.

The advent in recent decades of ever more deadly anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) has led to premature obituaries for the tank. Whether delivered from earth or air, these missiles can certainly dispatch tanks efficiently, provided the conditions are right. For an observer at a test it is a fearsome thing to be enveloped by the wild hiss and scream of an anti-tank missile during the ten-second interval between its launching from a Cobra helicopter and its obliteration of a sacrificial tank half a mile away. Commercial military magazines are fat with ATGM advertisements that can ring as boldly as those for laundry detergents. The boast for the European HOT missile, for example, is that it "destroys any battle tank at ranges up to 4,000 meters." But tanks can be defended against likely ATGM positions, with short-range artillery barrages, commando units to "take out" the enemy positions, and smokescreens that make it difficult for an ATGM to home in on its target. And, although helicopter missile ships are adept at reaching their targets, even ones in rough terrain, they are also vulnerable at the moment of launching an ATGM and guiding it to its target. Hovering like an oversized bumblebee, an anti-tank helicopter can easily be knocked down, even by rifle fire.

From the ground the Merkava is particularly hard to

hit, because, with a profile lower than that of any other tank, it is hard to see. It is remarkably good at hiding in seemingly open terrain, like a large pheasant in a bramble. In the Bekaa Valley during the summer of the Lebanon war, for example, it was startling to approach a thin line of cypress trees bordering an apparently empty field only to find, on the other side, three dozen Merkavas, each weighing sixty tons, hunkered down in the furrows of the field.

THE ISRAELIS HAD NEVER INTENDED TO DEVELOP A tank of their own. In 1966 they had embarked on a quite different course, by striking a deal with the British to buy the new Chieftain tank, the successor to the aging Centurion, which had been a mainstay of the Israeli Armoured Corps. The British even agreed to an arrangement for eventual joint production, under which, one day, the Israelis would be licensed to assemble Chieftains in their own country.

The deal was a triumph for Israel. After a national lifetime of hit-or-miss shopping in the secondhand market, Israel would at last have an assured supply of new tanks. In earlier years Israeli agents had scoured Europe for unwanted tanks, buying mostly Shermans left over from the Second World War. Often, like scrap dealers, they had paid by the ton. Israel took a step upward when the French sold it some AMX-13 light tanks for use in the 1956 Sinai campaign. In 1960 the British began passing along secondhand Centurions. From West Germany came a batch of outmoded M-48 Pattons. Other M-48s came from as far away as the Philippines. It was not until 1964 that, in response to the arming of Egypt and Syria by Russia, the United States began to send tanks to Israel. By 1966 Israel had nearly 600 tanks, a ragtag body whose backbone was Centurions and M-48s.

Tanks were far from the most valued part of Israel's army at the time. The embedded national belief was that the key to successful land warfare would always be what it had always been—the foot soldier, preferably a kibbutznik and certainly a committed Zionist, attacking by surprise at night. Nearly every Israeli teenager aspired to the glamour of the paratroop force, an outfit that in 1952 had been raised to elite status by an already legendary and controversial young colonel named Ariel Sharon.

A measure of the preference for infantry over armor was Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan's plan to have the infantry lead the thrust into Sinai in 1956, followed by tanks hauled on flatbed trucks (lest the tanks break down while rolling on their own), with their crews bringing up the rear in buses. Despite Dayan's misgivings, the tanks performed well in Sinai, and the Israelis soon began to upgrade the Armoured Corps. In fact, they had little choice, given the great buildup of Russian-supplied armor on the Arab side.

A border encounter with the Syrians on the Golan Heights in November of 1964, however, proved Israeli armor to be in a dismal state, fully eight years after Suez.

The Syrians had been firing at Israeli tractors and road-building equipment from concealed positions on their side of the Heights. On the morning of November 3, in a carefully planned response, a company of Israeli Centurions struck back—or tried to. Despite a furious ninety-minute barrage the Centurions failed to hit a single Syrian tank. Their own smoke obscured the view and choked the crews.

IT WAS AT THIS TIME THAT ISRAEL TAL, A WIRY, DOMINEERING forty-year-old brigadier general with minimal patience, took command of the Armoured Corps. In the War of Independence, Tal had been a master of gunnery, as both a marksman and a mechanic. Always impeccably turned out and a stickler for discipline, he had once commanded the army's officer-training academy. After the Sinai campaign, in which he had led an infantry brigade, Tal had been part of a cadre of top infantry officers assigned by Dayan to shape up the Armoured Corps. This assignment was made in the informal style of those days: when Dayan called Tal to ask when he could take over as deputy chief of the Armoured Corps, Tal said he would be available in a few weeks. "No—I meant, what time today?" Dayan said. Tal served as deputy commander for eight years and as commander for five.

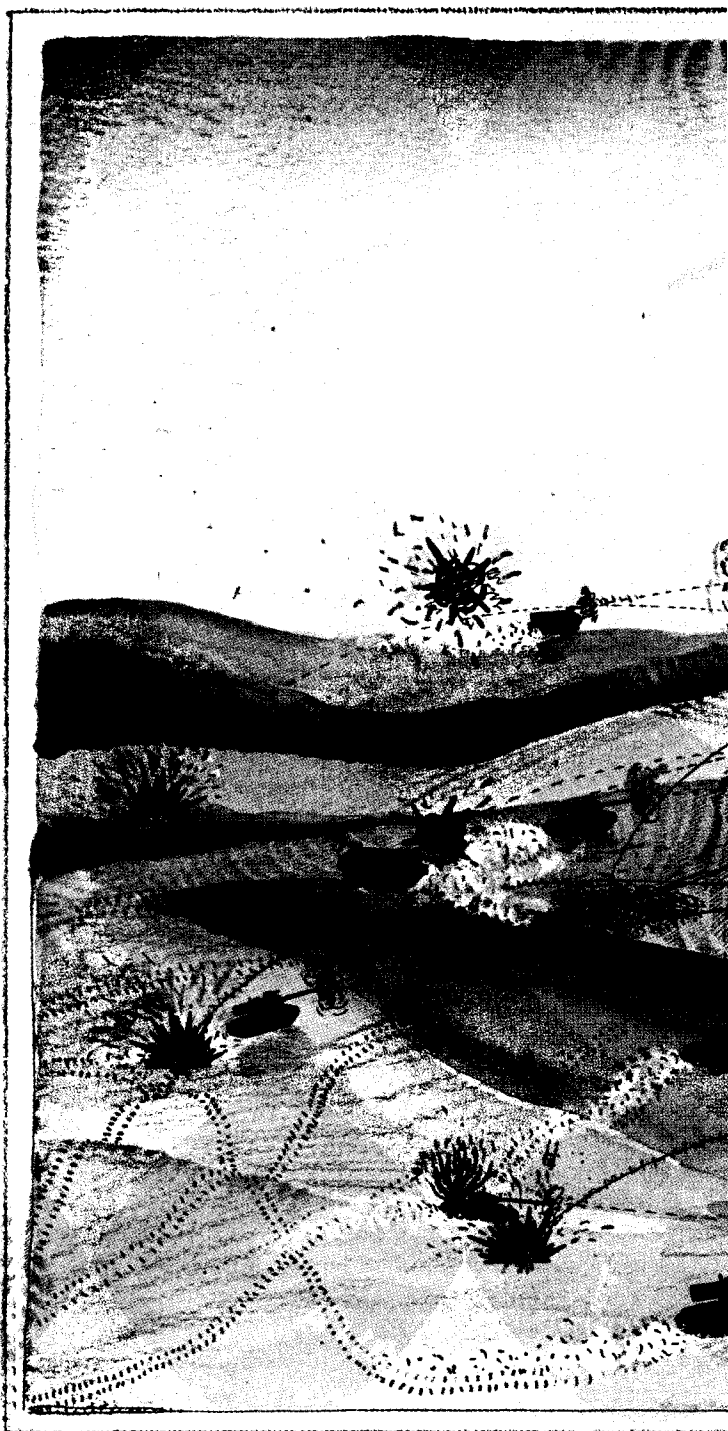
Tal's talents fit the Armoured Corps ideally. Though he was much respected as an infantry officer, what set him apart was a talent for mechanics united with a predilection for firepower. As a boy growing up in the cooperative-farming community of Beer Tuvia, he won a certain fame for a weapon he invented to kill arsenic-resistant groundhogs, which were ruining the potato crop. The weapon featured a pair of concentric downward-pointing gun barrels, to be aimed into the mouth of the burrow. When the groundhog surfaced, it nudged the outer barrel until spring tension triggered a round in the inner barrel. The device proved so effective that it was commercially produced. Tal went on to win prizes for other inventions, including a portable missile with trailing hooks that tear down barbed wire in flight and a new kind of bridge for spanning the Suez Canal (transport difficulties limited its use in the Yom Kippur War). But his greatest achievement is the Merkava—a project with which he is identified as surely as Hyman Rickover is identified with the nuclear submarine. Like Rickover, Tal has a reputation as a prickly outsider with unconventional views. He is known, for example, to favor a Palestinian state.

At the age of sixty, Tal is in his tenth year as assistant defense minister in charge of development. In the Israeli military establishment few men stay around so long. But Tal is a law unto himself. His office, on the second floor of defense headquarters, in central Tel Aviv, is filled with odd items like shell cases and a new version of a crew seat for the Merkava. The walls are covered with dozens of photos of the Merkava, including one of the tank in turret-deep snow on Mount Hermon. Tal works in blue jeans and

a well-pressed sport shirt. While he seems to have no time for anyone, in reality little misses his eye. When a teen-aged girl soldier timidly entered his office to deliver a cable one morning, Tal asked, for no obvious reason, "How was your brother's vacation in Europe?"

"Fine," answered the surprised private. "But how did you know he came home?"

"Who else would have brought you that nice new necklace?" Tal said. The girl reddened—less from the compliment, probably, than from the realization that this curt general could distinguish between her old and her new jewelry. As she exited, Tal surveyed a line of engineers



waiting for him. All of them looked exceedingly nervous—perhaps because they also were aware of Tal's unsparing eye for detail.

In Israel today one typically hears two comments about "Talik," as he is universally known: that he is short (in fact, he is barely five feet six) and that he is *meshuga*. In Tal's case these two attributes are always linked, as if the one were the excuse for the other. It may have been the genes of his Russian forebears that determined Tal's height, but what makes him *meshuga*, by common consent, is that he was crazy enough to think that he could build an Israeli tank.

WHEN TAL TOOK COMMAND OF THE ARMoured Corps, a new tank was far from his mind: like his predecessors, he planned on improving what tanks he had. Although the corps was stuck with a tank inventory that was mixed and even mongrelized—with American engines in British tanks and British and French guns on American tanks—Tal believed that the whole arsenal could be subject to a single high standard of operation and maintenance. Unlike its crew, Tal said, a tank had no Zionist sympathies. If it ran out of fuel or if its cannon was improperly aligned, the most inspiring lecture would not make it move forward or shoot well.



Nor would the undoubted motivation of the crew save the day.

Tal's vision of the Armoured Corps required that its men as well as its machines be standardized. Why, for example, should the four members of a tank crew wear four different shades of khaki? This was a touchy subject. A former commander had caused an upheaval by insisting that all corps members wear the same color socks. At least some degree of individuality was considered to be a matter of honor in an army composed primarily of reserve soldiers. But Tal believed that a uniform meant exactly that. Whether they liked it or not, all the soldiers were soon dressed accordingly.

Tal next insisted that all orders be followed unquestioningly, even blindly. For a kibbutznik in particular, following an order was a sometime thing. To do so without discussion was unthinkable. In the Israeli army it was not uncommon for a recruit to talk back to a general.

Tal announced that if it were for the good of the army, he would not hesitate to humiliate or even starve the men. The uproar was enormous. Delegations from the kibbutzim, from political parties, and even from the army brass came to protest. As Shabtai Teveth explains in his fine book on the Armoured Corps, *The Tanks of Tammuz*, the roots of Israeli society spring from the kibbutz—a free society that “stands for inner discipline which leads to unity of action through the consent and understanding of each individual, and shrinks back from any form of coercion.”

Tal's iconoclastic approach got quick results. In August of 1965 a company of Centurion tanks on the Golan Heights took aim at an especially important target: construction equipment being used by Syria in an attempt to divert the Jordan River, Israel's principal water source. Working six miles from the border, Syrians were confident that they were beyond the range of Israel's guns. The previous November an Israeli unit had failed to hit Syrian tanks at a fraction of that distance. But the Centurions scored several direct hits—a remarkable feat of gunnery by any standard. The gunner in the lead tank was Israel Tal. Being cautious—rather than swashbuckling, like Ariel Sharon—Tal would not normally have put himself in that position. But he wanted to be subject firsthand to the rigorous procedures he had instituted for tank gunnery.

In the mid-1960s a friendly rivalry developed within the Armoured Corps between the crews of the British-built Centurions and of the American-built Pattons. The Centurion was a more trouble-prone tank. Its original gasoline engine, for example, had a life-span of fewer than 500 hours. The Ordnance Corps, in charge of maintaining equipment, replaced it with the same reliable American diesel engine the Patton had. The Centurion was also heavy and rather slow, blitzkrieg being in no way a British concept. What made it shine was its superb performance under fire: even when hit, it was not an easy tank to stop. For Tal, this was its redemption. Of the triad of elements that make a tank—firepower, mobility, protection—Tal held with the British that protection must be emphasized,

even though heavier armor inevitably reduces mobility. He scorned, for example, the fast but vulnerable light French AMX-13 tanks, which were banished to the rear after 1956.

Tal's overhaul of the Armoured Corps, as well as his preference for British tank design, was to have resulted in the arrival of the first Chieftains in 1970. In 1966 the Israelis had already begun exhaustive tests of two Chieftains supplied by the British. They suggested some seventy design changes, all of which were accepted by the British engineers. At last the Armoured Corps would have a new, first-class tank manufactured for its own needs. It seemed too good to be true—and it was.

One morning in November of 1969, only days before the agreement was to be signed, Tal received a cable from London that shook him to his bones. The British had canceled the deal. Even as the Israelis had been assured all was well, it seemed, a debate had raged within Harold Wilson's cabinet over the Chieftain sale. In his memoirs of the period (*The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, Vol. III) Richard Crossman, the late social-services secretary, wrote that the Israelis were “strung along” while a final decision was repeatedly postponed. At one point, Crossman wrote, Michael Stewart, the foreign secretary, announced that he had persuaded the Americans to agree that “if we [don't] supply Chieftains they [won't] supply tanks either.”

“I will accept that if necessary we must always let the Israelis down,” answered Crossman, who was staunchly pro-Israeli, “and I will accept that if necessary we can't afford to supply them with tanks because of the desperate situation we are in with the Arabs, but, if so, shouldn't we openly tell the Israelis . . . that we leave them free to get arms elsewhere?”

The cabinet's principal fear, according to Crossman, was that the sale of Chieftains to Israel might so enrage the Arabs that British installations abroad would be burned, Arab money would be withdrawn from British banks, and the potentially lucrative Arab market for Chieftains would be cut off. (In the end the largest single order for the tanks came from Iran and amounted to more than a thousand Chieftains. Because Iran then had good relations with Israel, that sale almost surely would have been consummated anyway.) In fairness it must be said that the British did also ban Chieftain sales to the so-called “confrontation states” of Jordan, Egypt, and Syria—though it was reported that Jordan had received fifty by 1983 with 228 more on order.

The collapse of the Chieftain deal hit Tal hard. It was not only that he had been its leading proponent. He had a rare soft spot for the British. As a teenager he had volunteered for the Jewish Brigade of the British Army and had served in the Italian campaign. In the clandestine pre-statehood army Tal would read to his troops at night, by flashlight, not the Hebrew poets but Rabindranath Tagore. More than most farm-born sabras, Tal was at home in English. He had genuinely believed that the British would not undercut him.

Tal had no heart to shop elsewhere for another tank deal. Besides, there was almost nowhere to shop. On the eve of the Six-Day War, in June of 1967, De Gaulle had begun to embargo arms sales to Israel—including even Mirage aircraft that had been paid for. The West Germans, as sensitive to Arab opinion as the English and the French, would surely not sell their new Leopard MBT (main battle tank) to Israel. That left only the United States. Despite Michael Stewart's assertion, it did seem that if Golda Meir went to Washington, where she was much admired, tanks would be forthcoming. But this source, too, could one day be blocked. Tal was determined to build a tank of his own.

THE PROSPECT OF NO LONGER HAVING TO WEAR THE supplicant's smile was attractive to Tal, but independence was only half of it. He also wanted a tank no foreign supplier could offer him, a unique tank for a nation with unique priorities. The Chieftain's designers had put protection of the crew ahead of mobility but behind firepower. Tal proposed to build the first tank that would subordinate both firepower and mobility to protection of the crew.

It is not that a soldier's life is worth more to Israelis. They have fewer soldiers to spare. The 6,000 killed in the War of Independence, for example, represented one percent of the Jewish population. The 700 killed in one week of the Yom Kippur War was proportional to the number of American soldiers lost in a decade in Vietnam. The Israeli losses were highest among tank crews, with the most fatalities sustained by commanders. This was because of their insistence on standing upright with the upper halves of their bodies outside the tanks. But the commanders believe that there is no other way to react fast enough in battle. "We don't do this as a policy," says a former company commander, Aviv Eckstein. "You can't enforce policy. It has to be a *way of life*."

The ways in which men in tanks can be killed are many. The armored envelope protects the crew to a point. Then it turns on them. When an anti-tank projectile hits it, metal slivers ricochet in the closed area and hydraulic fluids spilling from ruptured pipes begin to burn. Choking fumes fill the tank. Ammunition explodes, often building up such pressure that the turret pops straight up like a champagne cork. Those able to scramble out of the hellhole have no choice in a conventional tank but to go up and out one of the tank's three hatches. Their high visibility—often they have become human torches—makes them easy picking for snipers. Grim-humored Israeli crewmen have been said to carry garden trowels with them—so that, according to one, "your buddies can scrape you up off the ground if your tank gets hit."

At the time the Chieftain deal fell through, the Western nations developing tanks were the United States, Britain, West Germany, France, and Sweden. Israel had neither the industrial muscle to shape multi-ton pieces of ballistic steel into hulls and turrets nor mastery of the electronic

and optic technologies that go into modern tank gadgetry. It also lacked broad-scale managerial expertise, which can be more elusive than the technologies themselves. It started to attack this problem as Israeli Aircraft Industries geared up to develop its Kfir fighter from stolen French blueprints, after De Gaulle's arms embargo. Despite the more exotic technological requirements that a supersonic fighter has, it is less complicated than a modern tank. The Kfir has 18,000 parts, the Merkava more than 30,000, nearly all of which must take more abuse in the harsh world of land combat than do those of the Kfir in the air.

Although Israel may not have had the wherewithal in 1970 to build a new tank, its wizardry with old tanks, not to say tank carcasses, was unsurpassed. Nearly thirty years after having been junked by the Allies, its ancient Sher-mans, refitted several times over, had held their own against new Russian-built tanks in the Six-Day War.

The most elaborate metamorphosis of any tanks, however, was that of the Centurions. Besides new American diesel engines they got an altered rear configuration (to accept the larger engines), new transmissions, new machine guns, new range finders, new cupolas, and new electrical systems, as well as many other modifications. Renamed the Ben-Gurion, this chef d'oeuvre of the Israeli tank works was formally presented at ceremonies in the spring of 1970 before an audience that included the British military attaché. Like overproud new parents, the Israeli speakers dwelt at length on the virtues of the remade tank. Then the attaché stepped forward. "I guess we British can be proud," he said, "that we have created the most modified tank in the world."

An entire production line at the Israeli tank works was devoted to the recycling of captured Russian tanks—notably T-54s and some T-62s. Israelis have even been known deliberately to downgrade warheads fired at Russian-built tanks, using enough firepower to put the tanks out of action without totaling them. These tanks have found their way into the Israeli Armoured Corps as well as into the arsenals of Third World nations and into U.S. testing bases.

It was, in a way, this proven ability to upgrade old tanks that presented the first and most formidable barrier to Tal's dream of a new tank. Why pour scarce dollars into a void, ran the argument, when the same funds would surely restore an enormous number of outmoded tanks? Suppose Tal's design failed or was overwhelmed by bugs? What if the design succeeded but the manufacturing process failed? What if the problems were solved but it all took too long? The tanks that could be upgraded quickly and in great numbers might not be the very best, but their crews could be expected to make up in discipline and inventiveness for any insufficiencies. Among the powerful voices arguing against Tal was that of General Amos Horev, then the quartermaster general. Even today Horev finds this subject so "painful" that he refuses to discuss it publicly.

Though the debate over the Merkava may have been spirited and even bitter, it was nothing compared with the debate then taking place in the United States over the de-

velopment of a new MBT. The Abrams tank, which came out of that strife, was preceded by two other tanks, each of them stillborn amid intense public criticism of its cost and workability. The Abrams itself was excoriated by congressional committees, by the General Accounting Office, and by public-interest groups. Competitive bidding for various phases of preproduction and production was intricate and time-consuming. In all, some thirteen years passed before the Abrams went into production—and when it did, the criticism was only slightly diminished.

Arguments over the Merkava project, in contrast, were carried out privately and informally, and only at the top levels of the Defense and Finance ministries. Even though the Israeli press is exceptionally aggressive, the issue never reached print. The Knesset, unlike Congress with the MBT, had little oversight power in the matter. The Merkava go-ahead required the approval of only two men—Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir.

Though schooled in infantry rather than armor, Dayan agreed that the tank should be built. But the real push came from Sapir. Long known as Israel's chief booster of industry, he saw an opportunity for local manufacturers to gain a whole range of expertise from developing the Merkava. He and Dayan met on a Sunday morning in August of 1970 and formally agreed to allow Tal to go forward with his tank.

IN A HUT AT THE SPRAWLING TANK WORKS THAT FALL Tal assembled a group of just eight men—engineers, model builders, and tank-warfare veterans. Their assignment was to think the freest possible thoughts about the ideal tank for Israel. It is a sign of Tal's persuasiveness, not to say absolutism, that they worked neither for the Armoured Corps nor for the Ordnance Corps but for him alone. Only in this way, Tal insisted, could they be unfettered in their thinking.

Given his own reputation, Tal might well have chosen a more diplomatic type as his project director. Instead, he picked another difficult man, Brigadier General Israel Tilan. One of the engineers who had been responsible for the remaking of the Centurion, Tilan was as obsessed as Tal with the idea of building a tank. He was also a man who could not pass up a mechanical challenge. The story is told that the son of one of the engineers was having mechanical troubles with his ancient Renault Dauphine. He was instructed to park it with the hood raised where Tilan would see it on his way to work. "He won't be able to resist," the young man was told. Tilan did indeed bury his head beneath the Dauphine's hood, the story goes; it was only when he came up for air that passers-by could see, by his epaulet insignia, that this mechanic was a brigadier general. Tilan could be high-handed in getting a man he wanted for the group. In order to commandeer temporarily a particularly gifted draftsman at Ordnance headquarters, for example, he offered any other four men under his com-

mand in exchange. "Temporarily" meant almost nine years.

Tal repeatedly used his lack of formal engineering credentials to profess an inability to see why certain of his ideas would not work. Why, for example, couldn't the tank be surrounded by a magnetic field that would fend off incoming projectiles? Told by the engineers that this was not a technically realistic goal, Tal insisted that he be given a full written report on the physics of why it wouldn't work, inspiring the engineers to make a counterproposal: why not magnetize alternate tanks in each column to reduce fuel consumption? Each magnetized tank could pull along the tank behind it, thereby halving fuel needs. Since tanks get three miles per gallon or less, this would be an enormous savings.

Though many in the regular Ordnance Corps who heard about ideas like these wrote off the little group in the hut as "airheads," the group's viewpoint was actually quite down-to-earth. Building a tank from scratch was risky enough without venturing into the unknown, however much promise it held. An exception was Tal's decision, in April of 1971, to put the engine in front. Apart from the experimental Swedish "S" tank, which had neither a turret nor a rotatable cannon, and was arguably not a true tank, all tanks then operational were powered by rear engines. Since most hits on tanks are frontal, the engine would be knocked out more often than if it were in the rear. But that was exactly Tal's point. Why not use the engine as a buffer? Better it should suffer than the crew. The 900-horsepower V-12 diesel engine planned for the Merkava would be a very substantial buffer. Tal insisted that the replacement of a damaged engine in the field should take no more than an hour.

The placement of the engine in front freed up the rear of the tank for another innovation with lifesaving potential—a pair of back doors, which could be used for escape or for pulling into the tank wounded soldiers who could not be reached by other rescuers.

As the Merkava took shape on paper, the group felt the absence of a prototype. Nobody could be sure, for example, just how much the crew would be able to see from a turret that, if the front engine was used, would be farther back on the hull than was the turret on any other tank. The solution to the problem was crude but effective. A jeep was rigged up with an enormous sheet of tin extending well out over the sides and front. A tank periscope was installed over the dashboard, sticking above the tin sheet. For those in the Ordnance Corps who did not believe in the Merkava, the sight of this ungainly vehicle being driven around the tank works was a source of amusement. Teased by a skeptical tank mechanic, a member of the group lashed out with the worst curse he could summon: "You'll never drive our Merkava—I swear it!"

By the spring of 1971 a wooden mock-up of the tank had at last taken shape in a borrowed hangar. Access was strictly limited, usually to military men and high government officials. An exception was Moshe Safdie, the Israeli-born

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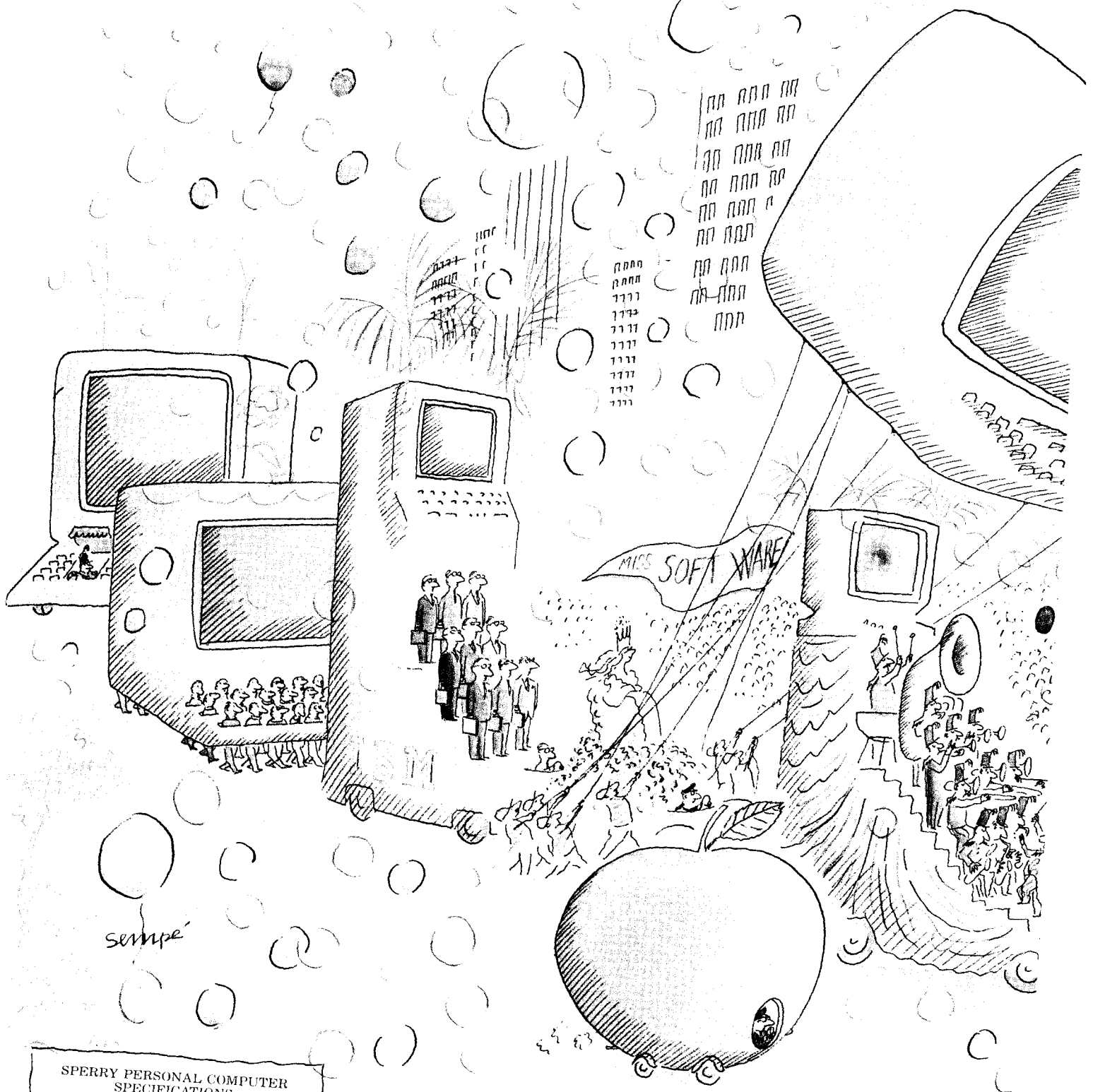
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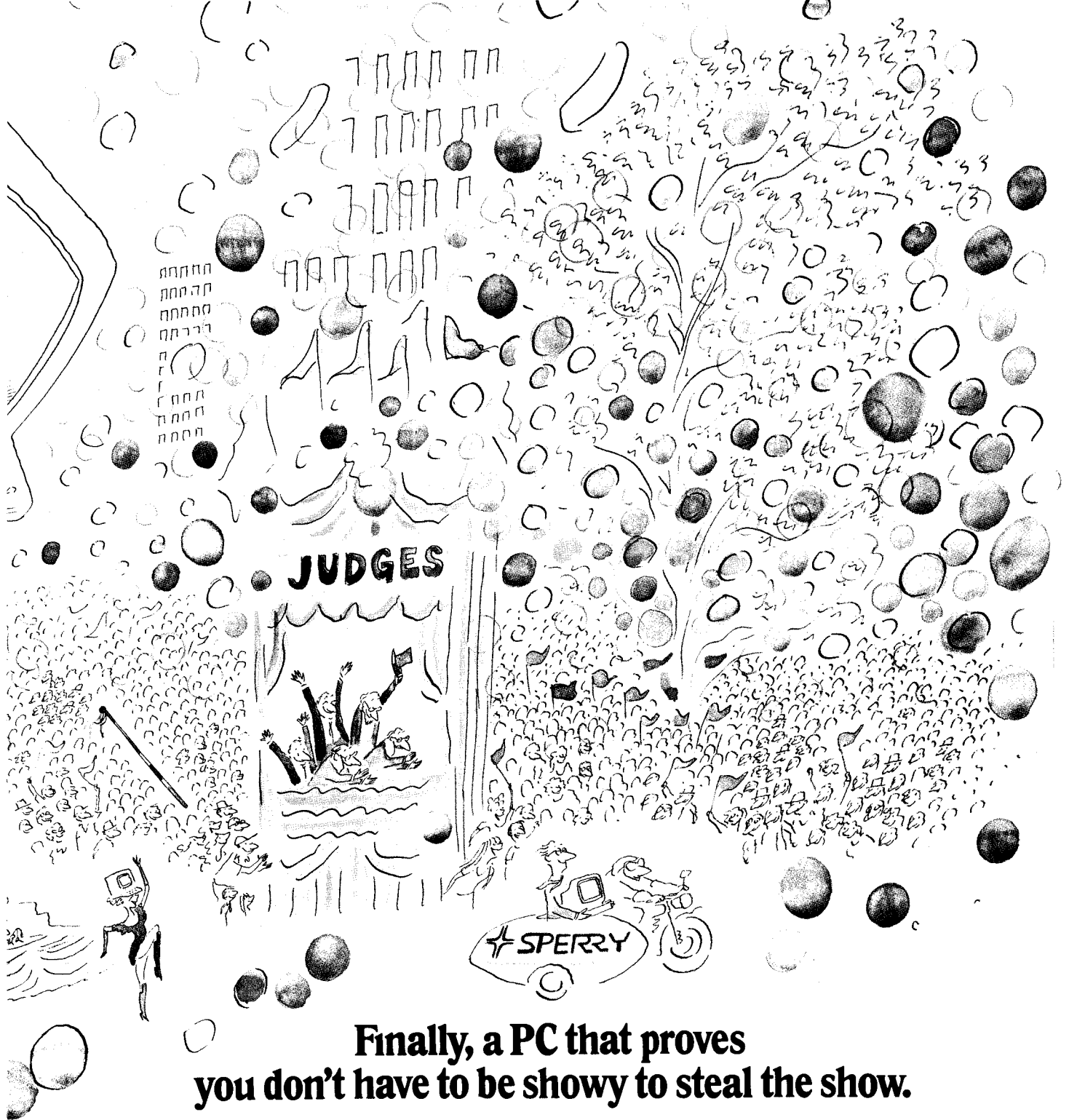
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 **SPERRY**

architect, who lives in Boston. Tal had read in Safdie's book *Beyond Habitat* a discussion of how beauty is achieved outside the realm of fine arts. Does it arise naturally out of the struggle to find the best solution to a design problem? Or must beauty be pursued for its own sake? Safdie's answer was that successful design is usually the result not of inspiration but of the slow, often painfully slow, problem-solving process itself. Out of this "design as process" comes beauty.

Safdie had occasionally been a guest at Tal's home in Rehovot, south of Tel Aviv. There, on Friday evenings, people from diverse callings gather with Tal and his wife, Hagit. "Let's test your theory," Tal said unexpectedly to Safdie on one of those occasions. The architect was taken to the tank works. Neither he nor Tal will comment on the observations he made there, but it may be that the sleek, even delicate, look of the sixty-ton Merkava, with its low turret, raked and tapered, bears the imprint of Safdie—a man who had never before been close to a tank.

As concept became reality, the engineers for each of the Merkava's numerous subsystems fought for shares of the tank's strictly limited size and weight. Walking out of a meeting where exterior and interior plans for the tank had been presented, the chief of ordnance was heard to mutter, "It's going to be a great tank. The only problem is that they've made the inside bigger than the outside."

The goal of putting crew protection first was accomplished less by swaddling the tank in exotic armor than by ingeniously using every possible component as a buffer for the crew. Even the fuel serves this purpose. Tests had shown that diesel fuel is far less likely than gasoline to ignite if the tank is hit. So in the Merkava conventional fuel tanks were eliminated in favor of reservoirs between layers of hull armor, where the diesel fuel can act to weaken the gas jets of dreaded shaped-charge projectiles such as rocket-propelled grenades, much used by the PLO in Lebanon. Another buffer is provided by the ammunition for the Merkava's three machine guns. It is stored in belts around the hull. As with the diesel fuel, it is not prone to explode if hit. Even if it does, because of its relatively small caliber it poses little threat to the crew.

Unlike small-caliber ammunition, stored main-cannon shells are a grave danger to the crew of a tank. All those photos from the Six-Day War showing popped-off turrets are a testament to that. For the Merkava a new heat-resistant container was developed to house the 105-mm shells, two at a time. Even amid a raging fire the shells within the boxes remain safe for as long as forty minutes. Since ammunition that is stored high up in the tank most often explodes first, these containers have been stored low. The danger of ammunition stored high has long been known to tank crews, if not to tank designers. Yet tanks as recent as the Soviet Union's T-62 still have ammunition stashed in the turret, directly behind the gunner's head. The high-turreted old Shermans suffered especially from this problem—one reason German gunners nicknamed them "Ronsons."

In the autumn of 1971, after nearly a year of brainstorming in the hut, the Merkava project passed into the preproduction stage. This meant transferring responsibility to a staff of about three dozen engineers in the Ordnance Corps. They were to write the specifications for each part and pass them on to the Quartermaster Corps, which would let manufacturing contracts. Thus ended a period that those who worked in the hut look back on with misty eyes—uncharacteristic for engineers. "It was the romantic stage," explains one member of the original group. "Afterward, when we were done playing with ideas, we felt the responsibility."

INTENSIVE AS IT WAS, EARLY WORK ON THE MERKAVA WAS hardly carried out in an atmosphere of imminent peril. After the total Israeli victory of 1967 it was widely assumed that the Arabs would not dare to make war again for a long time to come. With the onset of the Yom Kippur War, in October of 1973, this misjudgment brought about many catastrophic failures—in intelligence, in logistics, in the manning of the supposedly inviolable Bar-Lev Line at the Suez Canal. Not least was the failure of the Armoured Corps to adjust to the changed battlefield into which its tanks would roll.

The tank strategists had come to believe, based on Israel's swift advances in the 1956 Sinai campaign and in the Six-Day War, that flying wedges of tanks could, without infantry or even artillery support, smash through enemy lines on their own. Tal himself, as commander of the biggest of the three Israeli divisions in Sinai in 1967, had destroyed six Egyptian brigades in forty-eight hours and had projected a vanguard of tanks into El-Arish so quickly that they lost radio contact with the main body of the force. No symbol of this rout is so striking as a photo of boots that Egyptian soldiers had kicked off and abandoned in the sand, so that they could run away faster. Images like this helped the Israelis persuade themselves that their enemy did not have the will or the ability to stand firm and fight.

The unforeseen killing instrument in the early days of the Yom Kippur War was the Russian-made anti-tank guided missile called the Sagger. Packed into a portable canister that might be mistaken for a picnic cooler, the stubby missile can be directed to its target by a single soldier, who need not be highly trained. The Sagger delivers a powerful shaped charge that can hit a tank at a range of up to two miles. This time when the Israeli tanks came, the Egyptian soldiers in Sinai did not run. Firing from hidden positions, they knocked out at least a hundred Israeli tanks in the first days of the war, sometimes incinerating entire crews in the process.

With its crew-saving goal, Tal's tank project should have been given additional impetus by the dreadful experience of the Yom Kippur War. Instead, old misgivings about the undertaking resurfaced with a new urgency. With so many tanks to replace, so many to repair, was it realistic to give

priority to a project whose fruition was, at best, years away? This was a time for first aid, not for chasing after Tal's dream. Besides, the situation was quite different from the one in the days when the Chieftain deal had fallen through. Now the United States stood ready to supply Israel with all the new tanks it needed, just as Russia had already supplied its Arab clients.

In the aftermath of the war Tal found himself beset by an additional crisis, which had nothing to do with the Merkava. Oddly, it was the result of his having been one of the few top officers to escape criticism in the official investigation of what went wrong in the Yom Kippur War. Among those who did not fare so well was General Gonen, the commander of the southern zone. He was replaced at the end of 1973 by Tal, who had by then become vice chief of staff. Weeks later, as a tense truce held at the Suez Canal, where the Egyptian Third Army remained surrounded, Dayan ordered Tal to create an "incident" with the Egyptians and then use it to take a strategically placed hill held by the Egyptians.

MATERIALISM

If things aren't things
 So much as happenings,
 Or a confluence even
 More complex,
 Then there's no such thing
 As sky, though sky
 Is real, and we
 Have not imagined it.
 The everlasting
 Never began.
 Everything, then,
 Is the direction everything
 Moves in, seeming
 Not to move.
 I am waiting
 For something very
 Nice to happen,
 And then it happens:
 Your long dark
 Hair sweeps
 Across my chest
 Like sweeps of prairie
 Rain. Loveliest
 Of motion's possessions,
 Hold me still.

—James Galvin

Tal refused to obey the order. It was an ironic act, given that he had insisted to the Armoured Corps that all legitimate orders be unequivocally followed. "This was not a legitimate order," Tal says. "It would have started a full-scale war again." Dayan dropped his plan but summarily relieved Tal of his command.

Back in charge of the tank program, Tal continued to fend off critics who insisted that an Israeli-bred tank was impractical. His project had gone too far to be easily stopped. An orange grove adjacent to the tank works had been ripped out to make way for a new assembly line. Israeli purchasing agents were busy around the world negotiating for a spectrum of giant machine tools never before seen in Israel.

Ideally, these tools would have been dedicated to the production of specific parts. Because there were not yet any blueprints for those parts, however, less-efficient "universal" machines had to be ordered, to be adapted later to their tasks. This telescopic design process, as the Israelis call it, saved time but caused many troubles. "It meant that you couldn't test a part before you had a prototype," says Zvi Orbach, the production chief of the Merkava for Israel Military Industries (IMI), the principal contractor. "You couldn't debug before testing. And you couldn't go into production before debugging."

In order to get the money to manufacture the Merkava, Tal made a rare trip to the Pentagon in 1975. There he persuaded Deputy Secretary of Defense William Clements to allow Israel to use \$107 million in foreign-military-sales credits for the Merkava. FMS money can usually be used only to buy American equipment. Tal even got permission to spend \$59 million of the amount within Israel. No convincing official explanation for this precedent has come from either side. Privately, however, an official at the Israeli Embassy in Washington offered a curious but persuasive line of reasoning: each time the Americans sell a major offensive weapon to Israel, it makes the Arabs angry. Their response is to demand more such weapons for their own arsenals. But if Israel produces its own tank, it does not need to buy U.S. tanks and the Arabs have one less reason to be angry. That is why, according to this official, using FMS credits for the Merkava in Israel, where they cannot help the American economy, is good for both countries. Citing the precedent of the Merkava, Israel won permission in 1983 to use \$1 billion in FMS credits for development of its own Lavie ("Lion") fighter—an aircraft that is shaping up to be the equal of any in the world—and to spend \$250 million of those credits in Israel.

Given the scope and risk of the undertaking, it seemed logical that only IMI, which is giant, could build the Merkava. But Sapir was eager for private firms to do as much of the work as they dared. One of the more intrepid was Urdan, a small foundry near Netanya. It took on the challenge of casting the ten-ton turret, the turret ring, which is twenty-eight feet in diameter, and the hull slabs. No casting on this scale had ever been done in Israel. Foundations had to be sunk sixteen feet into the ground just to support

the new furnaces. "Our first castings came out looking like Swiss cheese," Michael Tamari, the president of Urdan, admits. "But in less than a year we were doing them as well as any you can find."

One exception to the rule that only Jewish Israelis may work in defense plants is made at the Urdan foundry, where a number of Vietnamese, former boat people, can be seen doing heavy welding. Though the pay is good, not enough Israelis, apparently, are willing to undertake the uncomfortable and dangerous job. Menachem Begin admitted the Vietnamese to Israel in 1978 as a reminder both that Jews like himself had not forgotten that they, too, had come to Israel as "boat people" and that the Arab nations had yet to help resettle the Palestinians.

The Merkava project came just in time to rescue Ashot Ashkelon, a factory established in 1967 to make parts for an Israeli automobile. After that venture flopped, in 1971, Ashot's chief, Ezra Yessody, went to Tilan and Tal. "Either you give us something to do or we close down and put hundreds of people out of work," he told them. Ashot now thrives making suspension components and ammunition for the Merkava.

Tal felt no need for the Merkava to be entirely Israeli-made. He was delighted, for example, to spend FMS funds for the reliable Teledyne-Continental engine and the sturdy Allison transmission, both made in America. The tubing for the M-60 105-mm cannon comes from a U.S. factory, though it is machined in Israel. Certain items, however, ended up being made in Israel by default. The tank commander's periscope, for example, is made by El-Op, in Rehovot. Originally the company had imported the prisms for it. But soon after taking over as El-Op's president, in 1977, Akiva Meier got a call from a Supply Corps general asking why a shipment of the prisms had been delayed. "If this part was important enough for a general to call personally about," Meier says, "it was important enough for me to track down." In the basement laboratory where the prisms were assembled, a technician told Meier in typically blunt Israeli fashion that it was idiotic to import the prism. It could be made as well, if not better, on the premises. He was as good as his word.

Meier points out that Israeli companies are not guaranteed to profit from military contracts. "Only the prototype is done on a cost-plus basis," he explains. "The production price is fixed in my contract. If I perform on time, I get an incentive bonus. If I deliver late, the government does not adjust the price for inflation, the way it does with everybody else. A few weeks' delay can wipe out my profit."

When the first Merkavas rolled off the assembly line, in 1976, for two years of exhaustive testing, more than 200 domestic enterprises had supplied parts for them. Some, like Elbit, maker of the tank's fire-control system, are big and sophisticated. Others, like the agricultural cooperative Stulah, maker of the crews' seats, are makers of military equipment only as a sideline. Less than a quarter of the tank's components are imported. The one ingredient that

could be neither produced at home nor ordered from abroad is what Zvi Orbach, of IMI, calls the master-craftsman factor. "For the Germans, making a new tank is like making a new washing machine—they've done it all before. For us, it's the first time. We could follow the instruction manuals to the letter on how to get a particular metal to bend a particular way. But what's missing is between the lines—the little secrets that are passed down from master to apprentice, from father to son. You don't pick up these tricks overnight."

Tal claims that while others might have a better tank technology, Israel has a better tank philosophy. During performance trials on the Golan Heights in 1976, Tal's philosophy tested the spirit of the engineers responsible for the suspension system of the Merkava. The test course was in an especially rugged section of the Heights, seemingly an endless bed of rocks. One spot on the course was notorious—an abrupt outcropping from which the tanks dropped a full three feet before landing with a sixty-ton jolt that often cracked one or more suspension arms.

"We had two problems here," Orbach says. "First, we'd built a tank that rode too smoothly. The boys inside didn't realize what stresses they were putting on the system. If every big bump had rattled their bones, they would have slowed down. The other problem was that these crews were quite proud to be driving their country's first home-grown tank. They wanted to show off, like hot-rodders."

Orbach, along with the engineers, thought that the drivers should be told to slow down—especially when they hit that three-foot drop. But Tal, despite his usual hard line on correct procedures, took an unexpectedly laissez-faire attitude toward the problem. "The crews have to be able to use the equipment as if it had no limits," he told Orbach. "Your job is to give them full freedom to destroy the tank."

"But I'm the one who has to rebuild it," Orbach answered. After much redesigning, the tank finally took the three-foot drop without cracking anything. The engineer responsible was given the honor of reporting this achievement to Tal. He remembers that Tal stared at him for a long moment, slowly shaking his head.

"Only three feet?" the general finally said. "You've got to do much better than that."

Tal's lack of diplomacy may be the main reason he never rose to be chief of staff—a post for which, everyone acknowledges, his professional qualifications are unmatched. "In that job you need a healer," Dani Halperin, an Israeli diplomat, says. "Tal is not a healer."

THE FIRST BATTALION OF MERKAVAS WAS DELIVERED to the Armoured Corps in June of 1978. Its commander had been a member of the little group that had started out with clean white paper in 1970. The Merkava's nine-year gestation period was remarkably short compared with the thirteen years required to develop both the Abrams and the West German Leopard II.

The Merkava II, already in the field, is powered by an

upgraded engine of 1,050 horsepower and a new Israeli-made gearbox that uses its power more efficiently than did the Allison model it replaced. The Merkava II also features what is apparently an Israeli invention—"active" armor. When hit by fire from a bazooka or a rocket-propelled grenade, a light charge on the armor's exterior explodes outward, diffusing the intensely focused jet of hot gas of the incoming shaped charge. Tal is at work on the Merkava III, due in this decade. It will be a dramatically improved tank. Armored protection, already unsurpassed in the Merkava I, will be doubled. The tank will feature a more powerful main cannon, probably 125-mm, and a new engine that will give it a much needed increase in cruising speed from 25 mph to 45 mph. In the desert and mountain environments where it must perform, the Merkava rarely has the chance to go flat out. The real importance of the extra power is the increase in acceleration—from zero to 18 mph in eight instead of thirteen seconds. This could be a critical margin if, say, an anti-tank helicopter suddenly appeared and the Merkava commander had to scoot.

Merkavas led the armored columns that invaded Lebanon on June 6, 1982. Though they were slow, they proved remarkably adept at negotiating the treacherous roads through the Shouf Mountains. At one spot, where a bridge had been blown up to stop the advance, the Merkavas rolled down the steep bank, over a dry riverbed, and up the other side. Neither the Centurions nor the M-60s behind them were able to do the same. The unique rear doors also proved themselves. In seven instances stretcher cases were loaded under fierce fire that would have made rescue impossible if the wounded soldiers had had to be carried down the hatches of conventional tanks. Merkava crews themselves, hit by nearly every weapon the enemy possessed, did suffer injuries and fatalities. But it is noteworthy that burn cases, so common in previous wars, occurred hardly at all.

A veteran Israeli tank officer once said that he would rather have a good man than a good tank. The wisdom of this sentiment was borne out one morning at dawn during the Lebanon war, when an Israeli ranger unit crept down a mountainside on the eastern edge of the Shouf and found a column of Syrian tanks, which must have thought it was well hidden. The relaxed crews were eating breakfast. In less than five minutes of nonstop firing, dozens of Syrian tanks were destroyed by hand-held anti-tank missiles. "Neither massed Merkavas nor any other force of tanks had ever been so destructive in so short a time as these few men," one of the rangers says.

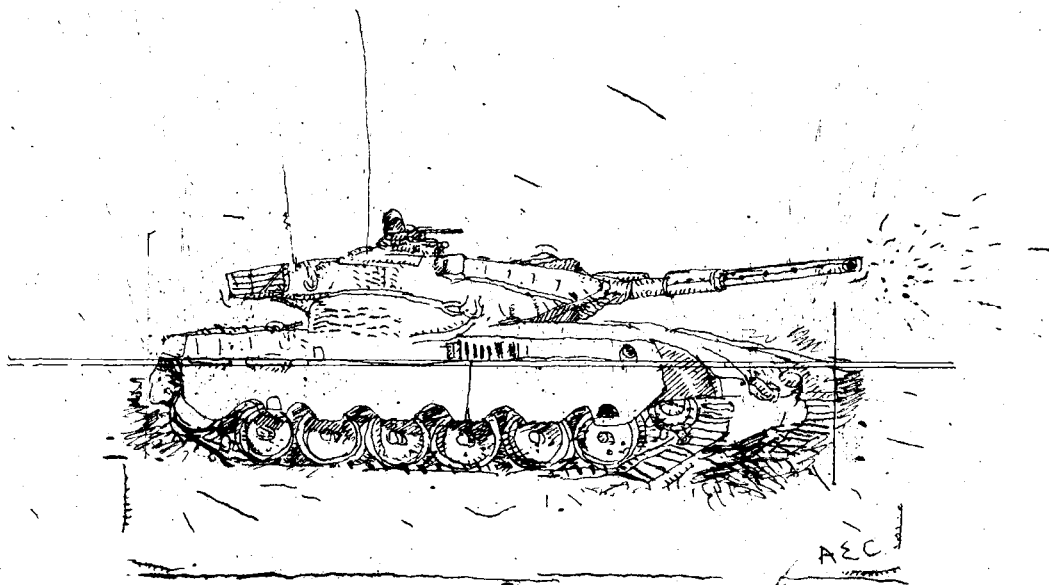
Tal was pleased with his tank's performance in its first war. Vanquishing the enemy's best in tank-to-tank combat was obviously a high point of his career. But one incident seemed to mean just as much to Tal. It was reported by the deputy manager of the Merkava assembly line. Like every other engineer assigned to the project, he was sent into the thick of the war to analyze firsthand how the Merkava was performing. He was in charge of inspecting turrets and hulls.

Near Karoon Lake, in southeastern Lebanon, he came upon a Merkava that, less than an hour earlier, had taken two direct frontal hits from the 115-mm cannon of a T-62—a gun more powerful than the Merkava itself has. These blows had knocked out the engine but had failed to penetrate the crew's compartment. The four crewmen were waiting beside the tank for the arrival of a maintenance unit. The deputy manager was so anxious to inspect the damage that he forgot to identify himself. The suspicious crew pulled him away.

"I'm from the factory," he explained. "We built this tank."

Spontaneously the grimy, unshaven crew members all kissed the engineer.

"Don't kiss me," he said. "Kiss your tank." □

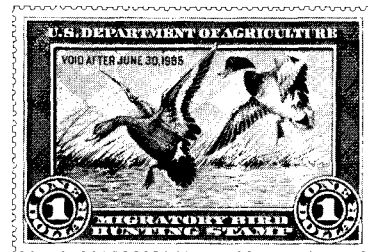


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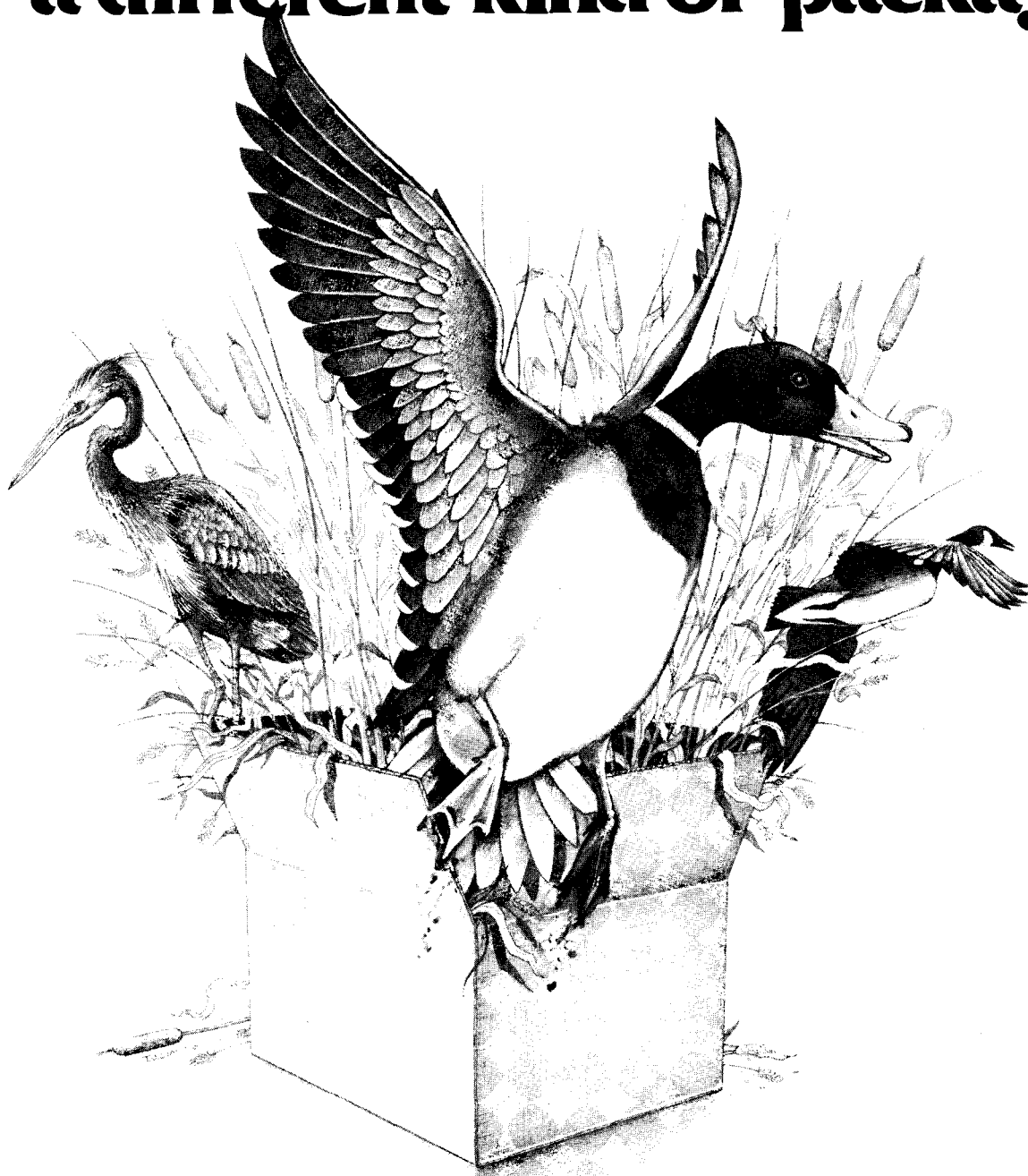
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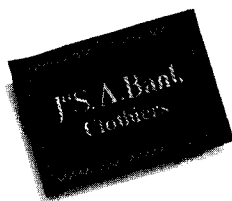
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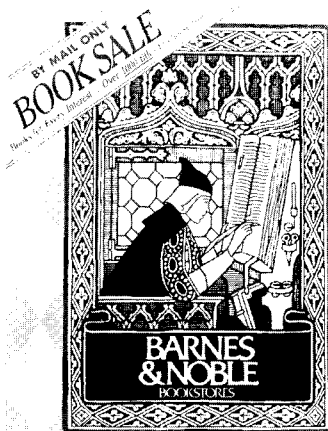
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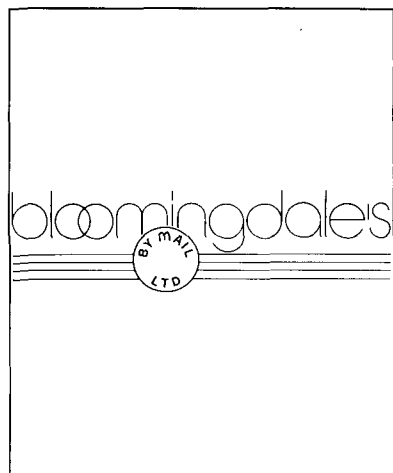
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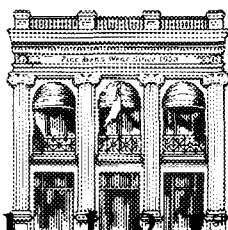
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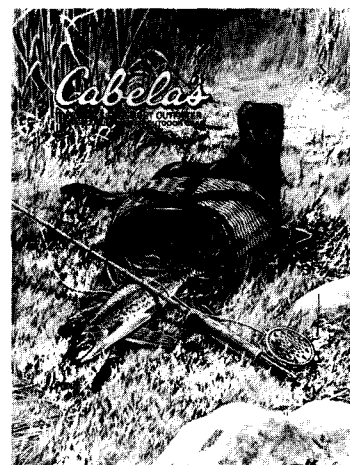


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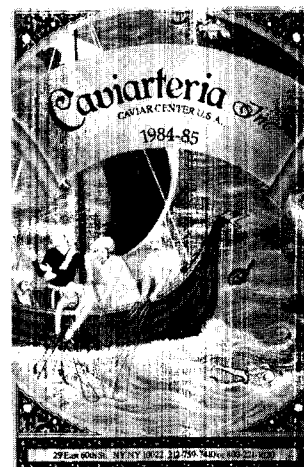
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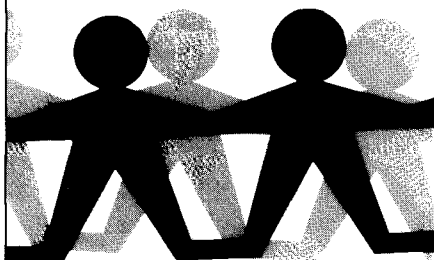
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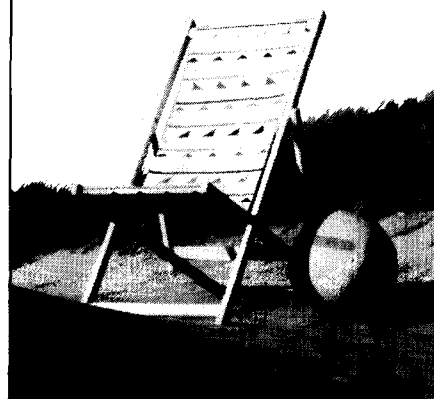


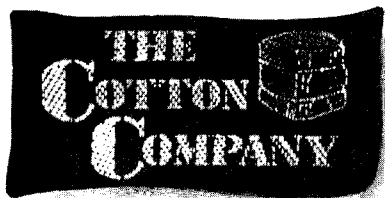
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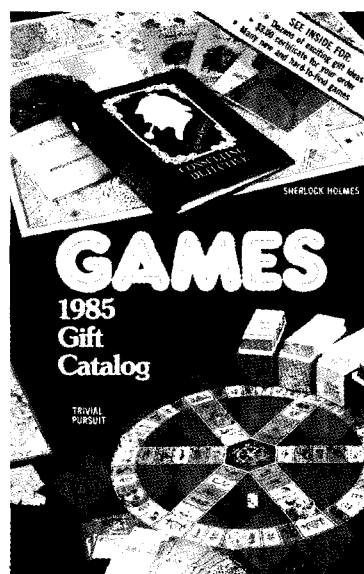
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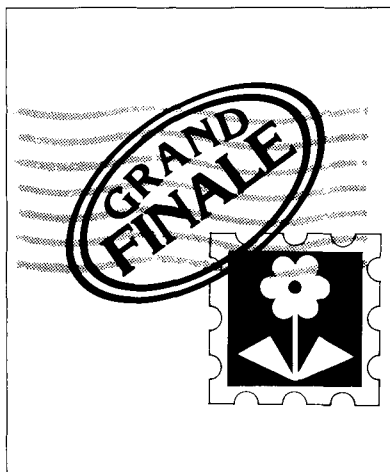
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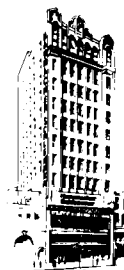


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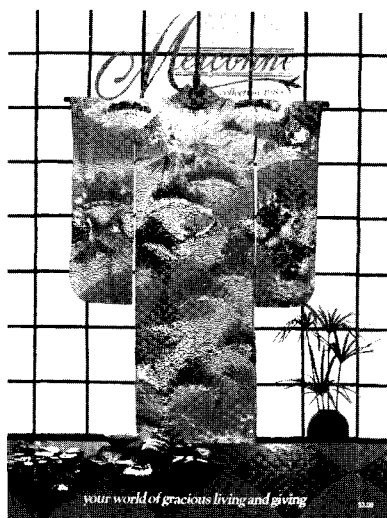
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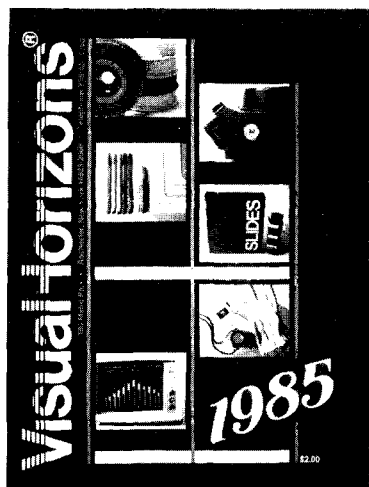


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MUSIC

A VISIONARY COMPOSER

BY ANNALYN SWAN

PETER MAXWELL DAVIES, one of the most compelling and original of today's composers, lives and works on the edge of the world—or, more precisely, in a two-room crofter's cottage on the island of Hoy, one of the Orkneys, treeless specks of land off the far northern coast of Scotland. His only companion is the ocean, which surges back and forth two hundred feet below his house. The self-imposed exile from the musical life of London seems fitting. In many ways Davies, fifty—a slight, wiry man with piercing eyes—is closer to the medieval world than to our own. The authors he most admires are Dante and Saint Thomas Aquinas. A number of his more than a hundred compositions have Latin titles. His operas and theatrical works address questions fundamental to the Middle Ages, including whether man can distinguish Christ from the Antichrist. His musical style similarly looks back to the medieval. While most modern composers build their music on standard twelve-tone rows or series, in which all twelve notes in an octave are put in a randomly ordered sequence, Davies creates tone rows modeled on the “magic squares” of the Middle Ages. “Magic squares” were ancient devices used by medieval alchemists and astrologers in their calculations and were thought to have mystical powers; they were rows of numbers corresponding to various planets and stars which were laid out in grids and then read vertically, horizontally, and diagonally. Davies is attracted, he has said, by their “associations.” In much of Davies's music the magic squares incorporate fragments of plainsong, the early liturgical music.

The result is music of visionary intensity, rich in overtones of the past, in lyric strings and the high, ringing sound of crotales (small cymbal-shaped metal instruments) and bells. Since Davies moved to Hoy, more than a decade ago, his music has been filled as well with the sound of the sea and the luminous beau-

ty of northern light. *A Mirror of Whiteness Light* (1977), for example, begins with a flourish of winds—Davies is a master of the theatrical touch. Then a bassoon intones a high, sustained C that echoes throughout the following languid section. String glissandos ripple like waves across the water. Gradually whitecaps form. Dance rhythms are heard, only to be cut off abruptly. The orchestra moans and shrieks. Then all is calm. A solo horn floats up and over the orchestra in a striking coda, intoning the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* plainsong that underlies the work. The other instruments pause—you can almost feel them gathering strength—and then hurl themselves upward in one final tidal wave of sound that builds and builds and finally breaks, subsiding in a spatter of notes flung up in its wake.

This is not like the northern music of Sibelius or the sea music of Benjamin

Britten, although Davies's music has been compared to both. It isn't remotely traditional or conservative. Davies is intensely modern, in subtle as well as obvious ways. His music has the same fractured lines, the same absence of hummable melody, the same lack of recognizable themes, that most modern music has. It progresses not through exposition and development of themes in the classical way but through transformations—series into series, section into section—that the ear cannot easily recognize. His compositions are densely layered: at any given moment several things are happening. Even to musicians trained in the modern, his music is likely to resemble a three-dimensional puzzle.

And yet Davies does provide ways in. Specifically, he establishes points of reference for listeners—recognizable and repeated elements that give one a feel for where the music is heading. There may not be, for example, a traditional tonic or dominant to be heard in his music, but he structures his works around tonal centers that help anchor the music in an analogous way. He also uses the past to help orient the listener. He does not simply borrow from earlier music, by, for example, throwing in whole hunks of medieval music. Nor does he rework old music, as the neoclassical composers did. Instead he juxtaposes past and present in a sort of shadow play, referring to the traditional elements of music but never stating them, so that we sense an order and continuity in the rigorous modernism of his music. Thus he composes four-movement symphonies that resemble in their contours, if not in their harmony, a classical symphony.

Davies has succeeded, then, in creating a kind of music that is akin to orthodox serial music but that differs from it in several significant ways. The structure is less rigid and obtrusive; the music is rich in references beyond its own closed system; it strives for cohesion where much serial music seems almost perversely disconnected. And if most modern music deliberately breaks with the past, Davies's just as deliberately bridges past and present.

FOR DAVIES, winning recognition wasn't easy, at home or abroad. He was born near Manchester, a grim industrial city. The son of working-class parents, he taught himself composition by studying scores in the library. When he asked to study music at his grammar school, in preparation for the O-level ex-



Annalyn Swan is a senior editor of and former music critic for Newsweek.

ams given all British students, the headmaster scoffed. The faculty at the Royal Manchester College of Music and at Manchester University, where Davies subsequently studied, proved to be hardly more enlightened. It was the mid-fifties, and the Austrian moderns—Mahler and Bruckner—were still highly suspect. So, in fact, was anyone but such homegrown products as Sir Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Charles Villiers Stanford. Davies wanted none of it. Along with a group of other students, including Harrison Birtwistle, who were eager to hear the new European music, he began listening to Stravinsky and Schoenberg.

At the same time, he became fascinated with the medieval and Renaissance music that he heard performed in local churches. He studied the works of Palestrina, Gabrieli, and sixteenth-century British composers, and soon noticed a technical similarity between preclassical and modern music. Just as serialism is built on one of the simplest and most unmelodic of elements—the tone row—so early music was based on simple and (to our ears) unmelodic plainsong. By subjecting the plainsong to so many changes that its identity became obscured, in a process analogous to the permutations made upon a tone row, medieval and Renaissance composers built towering musical edifices. That connection between old and new music proved central to Davies's later composing. So did his mastery of sophisticated medieval structural devices (two are called isorhythms and hocket), which give his music its rhythmic drive and contrapuntal strength.

The first of his works that Davies acknowledges, however, the Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (Nonesuch) of 1955, went in a different direction. Ten minutes long, it is a bright, lighthearted flirtation with the then omnipotent serialism, full of arching melody lines, jazzy rhythms, and trumpet flourishes. At the time, Davies was very much influenced by Schoenberg and Stravinsky. He also went to Darmstadt and met Stockhausen and Berio.

Davies never really signed on with the avant-garde, though. He dabbled in electronics but hated the claustrophobic studios. A year and a half studying in Italy reinforced his penchant for the mystical and medieval. With the wind sextet *Alma Redemptoris Mater* (1957) Davies revealed his fascination with medieval music. A number of intricately crafted

works followed. Some worried that Davies's hermetic, exquisitely structured music would be a dead end. Music that is based on small, private, arcane structures can become precious and contrived, something to be admired but not of lasting significance.

Then, in the mid-sixties, Davies did an about-face. With Birtwistle he founded the Pierrot Players, a group modeled on the configuration of musicians in Schoenberg's seminal work *Pierrot lunaire*. It included six instrumentalists and a soprano. (The group, now known worldwide, was renamed the Fires of London in 1970, when Birtwistle left.) What followed was an outpouring of expressionist theater works far more graphic than Schoenberg's original expressionism. Full of screeching vocal lines, instrumental bedlam, and grotesque, mocking parodies of everything from medieval music to Victorian hymns, these works produced in listeners a kind of fascinated horror. One English critic, writing of Davies's *Revelation and Fall* (1965), called it "a prolonged scream of agony, for which there is no precedent in English music."

Even today, with all of the wild experimentation that has intervened, those works remain disturbing portraits of a soul in torment. They mock and distort spiritual belief, question whether it is possible to recognize God, and revile artistic creation. *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (Nonesuch), first performed in 1969 and now a staple of the modern repertory, is a tour de force of madness. In it the mind of George III (or possibly of a madman who thinks he is the King of England; we can't be certain) slips wrenchingly between sanity and insanity. The work opens with jangling chords and a crazy parody of birdsong: the King is attempting to teach his canaries to sing. Music from George III's time begins "straight," only to go joltingly off-key before breaking down completely. The king speaks calmly one minute, and then howls like a caged animal the next. It's a nightmare world in which nothing is as it seems, and our unease is compounded by the almost primitive loathing we feel at watching a human being go mad.

Such volcanic outbursts could not last. By the late 1960s, as Davies wrote, he felt shattered artistically from "living through a sequence of works which I could only pen by an act of faith in my own unreasonableness." *Worldes Bliss*, an orchestral work that he composed in

1969, clearly echoes Davies's state of mind at the time. Thirty-seven minutes long, it strives restlessly toward some conclusion that, one feels, never comes. It is a gray, forbidding inner journey.

IN 1970 DAVIES went to the Orkneys on a holiday. That chance visit led to a profound change in both the man and his music. "It has been a tremendous ear and spirit cleaning," Davies has said. Since moving there permanently, several years later, Davies has come to reaffirm the great tradition of music as both a composer and a teacher: his first two symphonies, written at Hoy, are huge, lyrical, Mahlerian in their brooding intensity, the logical heirs to the great Austro-Germanic symphonies; and he has long been eager to teach and convert. He taught music at the Cirencester grammar school from 1959 to 1962, and he still spends a month a year at the Dartington Summer School of Music in Devon, England. He is currently preparing a series of books on the art of teaching music.

For the past eight Junes the towering Norse Cathedral of Saint Magnus in Kirkwall, the capital of the Orkneys, has resounded to the music of the Saint Magnus Festival, which Davies helped found. The festival brings to the islands performances not only of Davies's music but also of the standard repertory. For the festival Davies has written a series of glorious works for children, which are melodic but not simplistic. *Cinderella* (1980), the most ambitious so far, is an inspired updating of the fairy tale which casts Cinderella as an au pair girl. She of course gets her prince (in this case a reluctant heir apparent who sings, "What a rotten bore! I can't stand it any more. Mother wants me soon to marry"). But first there are playful choo-choo-train choruses, a merry Scottish reel and a lovely waltz, and roistering dance-hall turns that rival, in droll lyrics and musical laughs, the best operettas.

In his music for adults as well Davies seems to have found a sort of peace. The urgency that marked his expressionist works is still there, but it is tempered now by a feeling for natural phenomena. As the British critic Paul Griffiths wrote, the violent history and harsh beauty of the Orkneys gave Davies, for the first time, a subject he could approach without irony. The Orkney music, while storm-tossed, has a new calm at the center. It can seem hallucinatory, vast as the landscape itself.

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Stone Litany (1973), for example, a setting of Viking inscriptions left in the prehistoric Orkney burial chamber of Maeshowe, has a feeling of ancient, timeless magic. Scored for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, it unfurls hypnotically, seeming to come from far, far away. There are startling brass whoops like the cries of prehistoric birds, the unearthly, gleaming sounds of bells, and, all the while, the incantation of strange words that echo back through time, invoking ancestral memories that we never knew we had.

Similarly, *The Lighthouse* (1979), a chamber opera based on the mysterious disappearance of three Scottish lighthouse keepers from their post in December of 1900, seems to transport us into another world, one in which a malevolent force has triumphed. Filled with swirling fog and mists, it questions whether the men's own madness or supernatural forces led to the vanishing of the keepers. It leads inexorably toward a glimpse of a doomsday monster, summoned out of the darkness by the twisted mind of the religious fanatic among the three. *The Lighthouse* is a striking and important work, for it succeeds in wedding the dark vision of *Eight Songs* and other earlier theater pieces with the evocative strain of Davies's Orkney music.

Davies's music, the composer John Harbison once said, recognizes the power of darkness and the lure of evil—the "things the church would exorcise." It is a telling remark. His work has a certain grandeur, a holy terror, that is completely lacking in the angst of many contemporary artists and in the pallid, muttering expressionism of much recent music. Like a child, or a prophet, Davies sees with heightened vision. To him evil is tangible and terrifying. In a world of sanitized dreams, homogenized entertainment, and regulated environment Davies's music reminds us that there is another world out there—a world of magic and the supernatural, of demons that haunt men's souls, of helplessness before the fury of nature. His musical career can be seen as a spiritual quest more than anything else. Almost alone among modern composers, Davies has addressed in his works the most fundamental questions of life. He has explored modern man's sense of alienation from nature, captured the terrible sense of anger we feel at being cut loose from God, and, in the end, found a strength in retreat. □

PHOTOGRAPHY

FASHION PLATES

BY HAL HINSON

WANDERING THROUGH the rooms of the Irving Penn exhibition that was recently at the Museum of Modern Art, in New York—past the austere pictures of sleek models in Balenciaga suits and Dior bonnets; the Ektachrome still lifes; the platinum-palladium prints of squashed food cartons, fleshy nudes, and corroded cigarette butts; the quizzical, research-project portraits of writers and artists, of street artisans and Asaro mud men—I couldn't help but feel a kind of numbed admiration for the range and virtuosity of the work. But after a while my admiration gave way to impatience and then irritation with the photographer's cool, self-satisfied presentation of his own mastery. It wasn't until later, when I read John Szarkowski's introduction to *Irving Penn*, the book of Penn's photographs which accompanied the show, that I realized what was wrong: what I had found lifeless and enervating in Penn's work was what the exhibition had been designed to celebrate.

Both the book and the exhibition were fascinating, not so much for what Szarkowski intended to demonstrate about Penn's long and varied career as a photographer—namely, its “high craft” and “artistic seriousness”—as for what they inadvertently revealed about photography's attitude toward itself and the nagging insecurities it harbors about its position as an art form.

In the anything-goes atmosphere of modern photography, where a picture is a picture, and passport photos, newspaper stills, and family-album portraits are embraced by critics and theorists, the work of the commercial fashion photographer—the pictures of swanlike beauties draped in *peau de soie* and Russian sable, of perfume bottles and Courrèges sunglasses and Cartier watches—should also be accepted. But the relationship between the whole of photography and the specialized subdivision of fashion photography is an uneasy one. Fashion photography is the medium's bastard

child. Aside from its ties to the fashion and publishing industries, which are presumed to compromise its artistic purity, its most nettlesome aspect is that in no other area are photography's unfortunate imitative tendencies more baldly exposed.

SINCE ITS INVENTION, in the mid-nineteenth century, photography has tried to prove itself as something other than an art toy—a pale, mechanical adjunct to the other visual arts—and to assert itself as a medium with its own aesthetic personality. At the turn of the century Alfred Stieglitz and the members of the Photo-Secession movement—Edward Steichen, Clarence White, and Gertrude Käsebier, among

others—attempted to propel the medium into the mainstream of modern art not by simulating the work of painters but by exploring the formal issues of Impressionist, Symbolist, and Pre-Raphaelite art in purely photographic terms. Stieglitz said that the camera, and the various techniques and manipulations of the developing process, could be a means of individual expression. But what he sought to achieve with his machine was, essentially, the pictorial formalism that modern European and American painters and sculptors, many of whom were exhibited for the first time in his 291 Gallery shows, were striving for.

Fashion photography was largely the invention of Baron Adolf de Meyer and Edward Steichen, both of whom took fashion pictures for Condé Nast at *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* and contributed celebrity portraits to *Vanity Fair*. De Meyer was not officially a member of the Photo-Secession, although his photographs were exhibited at 291 along with those of Steichen, White, and Käsebier. He was, however, of the same artistic spirit.

Nowhere is fashion photography's



Irving Penn, *Colette*, 1951

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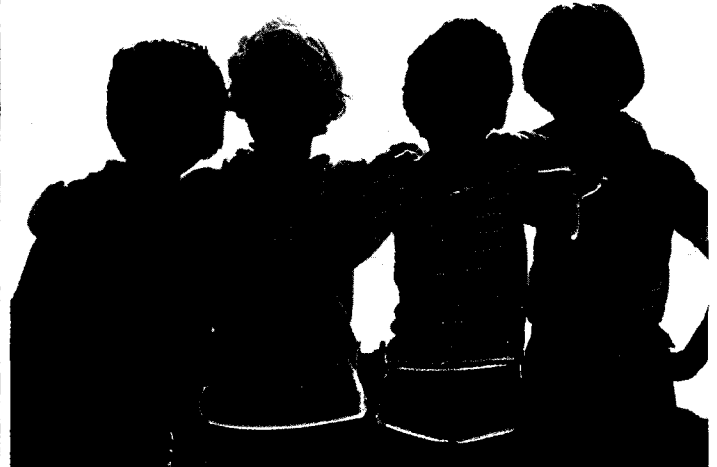
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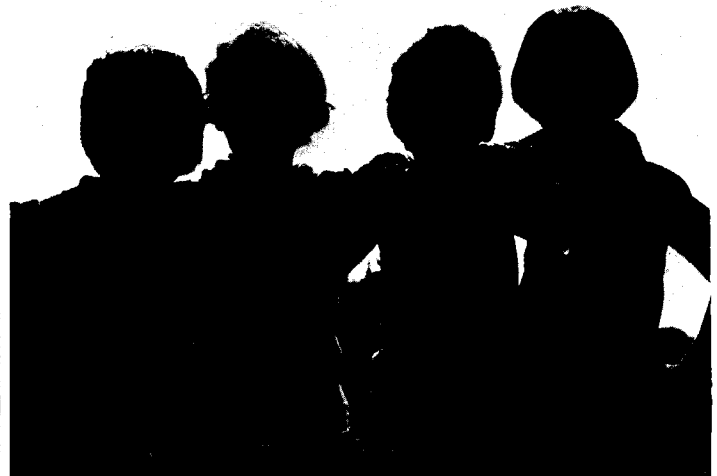
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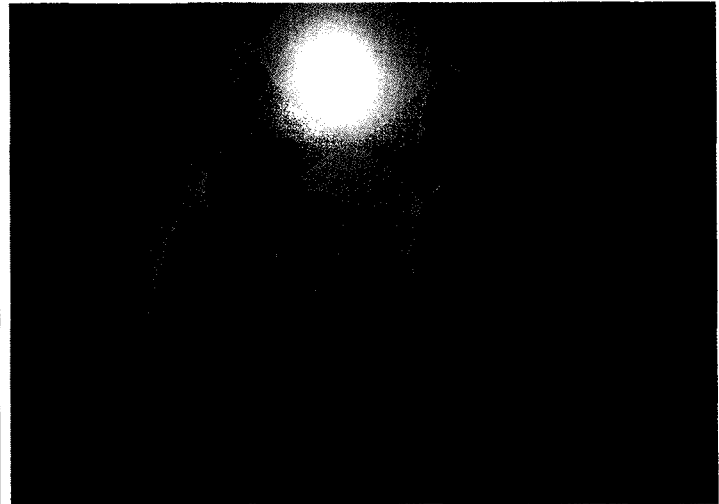
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ability to hold a bright mirror up to the world more evident than in the pictures of Adolf de Meyer. In his romantic portraits of the grand ladies of the Belle Epoque and his record of the courts of Edward VII and Diaghilev, De Meyer followed, and on occasion surpassed, the style of fashionable portraiture practiced by Whistler and Sargent. His pictures have a serene, timeless quality, as though he had captured his subjects at the peak of their flowering, the way they had never been before and would never be again. De Meyer transformed chic into a kind of spirituality—Cecil Beaton called him “the Debussy of photographers.” Looking at his pictures of his wife, Olga (who was rumored to be the daughter of Edward VII and the inspiration for *What Maisie Knew*), Nijinsky, John Barrymore, and Rita de Acosta Lydig, one feels cut adrift in the evanescent, vanished world of Proust and Wharton and James.

The fashion photographers who joined the staffs of *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* after the First World War—many of whom had trained in architecture or painting or design and had taken up the camera almost by accident—combined the attitudes toward photography defined by the Photo-Secessionists with De Meyer's impeccable sense of elegance and romance. But each responded to these influences in his own way, marrying them to ideas from other areas—from the Bauhaus style, surrealism, Dadaism, classical art, and Hollywood. Photographers like George Hoyningen-Heuné, his protégé Horst, Cecil Beaton, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, and Martin Munkaschi approached the culture of their time as if it were an immense banquet table brimming with delectable surprises, and they were impulsive, undisciplined eaters. Their pictures have a voluptuous eclecticism that skips flirtatiously along the edges of kitsch.

During the period between the wars the great fashion photographers held a position on the front lines of art and culture. Just as photojournalists gave us firsthand information about international affairs, fashion photographers gave us our first glimpses of what was new and exciting in art and fashion—an iconoclastic new artist or a bold new designer. But although the fashion photographers of the time were responsive to the avant-garde currents surging through the art world, they used them primarily as a backdrop for their opulent fantasies—as part of the fashionable baggage that they



Irving Penn, *Richard Burton*, 1950

dragged onto the set. The fashions of Chanel, Schiaparelli, Molyneux, and Adrian, which were at least ostensibly the photographers' subjects, also absorbed the influences of the other arts. And so fashion photographs, printed in the glossy fashion magazines, became a peculiar hybrid of theater and reportage—the stage on which that season's hot cultural events and the artists who created them were showcased.

To those who are reluctant to accept photography's claims to a place of equal status alongside the traditional visual arts, the photographers of the golden era seem to exemplify the medium's inherent parasitic relationship to the other arts. Following the collapse of the Photo-Secession, the so-called straight photographs of Paul Strand, Edward Weston, André Kertész, and Walker Ev-

ans pursued the same art-photography pictorialism but were influenced more by Cubism than by Impressionism or Symbolism. In taking advantage of the camera's documentary virtues—its capacity for clarity and factual realism—the straight photographers were concerned less with reproducing the literal surface values of modern painting than with finding photographic equivalents of its deep structure of geometric patterning and design. Pictures like Weston's famous pear-shaped nude, his fistlike peppers, and Evans's sharp-focus American storefronts and houses were more “modern,” more “photographic,” than the softer-edged pictorialism of the Stieglitz school, but they were pictorial nonetheless.

True modernism in photography (what, for lack of a better term, has been tagged “postmodernism”) began, as Janet Malcolm wrote in *Diana & Nikon*, “not, as has been supposed, when it began to imitate modern abstract art but when it began to study snapshots.” Since that time, around the late sixties, the messy, unartistic photographs of Garry Winogrand, Lee Friedlander, and Robert Frank—who, among others, rejected the quaint, painterly formalism of both the Photo-Secessionists and the straight photographers in favor of the haphazard, vernacular style of tailgate-party amateurs and church-social snapshooters—have sent shock waves through the art-photography establishment. The snapshooters broke the chains that bound photography to the other arts when they declared that to move forward, photography had to follow the lead not of Picasso, Matisse, or Manet but of the everyday photographers who without the slightest concern for the artistic design of their images pointed their Brownies and Instamatics at anything that moved.

SET AGAINST THIS avant-garde background, the fashion pictures of Horst and Beaton appear embarrassingly retrograde, like relics of photography's mimetic infancy. For Szarkowski, Irving Penn is a crucial figure, because he, along with Richard Avedon, has brought the world of modern photography into his portraits and fashion pictures.

Szarkowski doesn't suggest that Penn's cigarette butts, or any of his other pictures, should be thought of as part of the snapshot school (which he doesn't even mention in his introduction). As the carefully controlled and manipulated



Irving Penn, *Woman with Roses (Lisa Fonssagrives-Penn)*, 1950

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Irving Penn, *Still Life with Food*, 1947

images of a disciplined studio photographer, Penn's photographs are the stylistic opposite of snapshots. But, Szarkowski suggests, by this stubborn pursuit of opposite means Penn has achieved the same end as the snapshooters—a purely photographic image. In doing so, Szarkowski implies, Penn has done something extraordinary, something that the Photo-Secessionists, the straight photographers, and the snapshooters have all been unable to do—he has created images that satisfy our longing for a glimpse of the artist's designing hand but that also follow the unique dictates of photography rather than those of painting or the other arts.

As Szarkowski has made clear in his introduction, what he appreciates most in Penn's work—its "classical rectitude," its spartan rigor and "devotion to the sober elegance of clarity," and Penn's dedicated attention to purely photographic concerns—are precisely those aspects of his style that separate him from the old masters of fashion photography. Examining the fashion pictures, portraits, and still lifes that Penn took in 1947, the year in which the "essential Penn" emerged, Szarkowski writes that the "calm spareness of vision and manner in his pictures was breathtaking." He goes on, "Seen against the background of the various trilling, ornamental styles that had seemed intrinsic to the very substance of fashion magazines, they seemed to represent a new beginning."

The distinction that Szarkowski is eager to make is that although Penn *does* fashion photography, he isn't a fashion photographer in the usual sense of the term. As Szarkowski's wall label for Penn's 1975 "Recent Works" show at MoMA stated, "In Penn's case, one might guess that he has only rarely enjoyed more than a cursory interest in the nominal subjects of his pictures. For him the true subject has been not haute couture or cuisine, but line, tone, shape, and pattern, and the photographic intuition that will define their just relationship." Unlike the photographs of Horst, De Meyer, Heuné, Beaton, and others, which were filled with references to the prevailing world of culture and which narrated the life of the time, Penn's photographs presented themselves as autonomous, self-contained works of art—"not stories, but simply pictures."

Penn is also a comforting figure for the photography establishment because, although the photographs of the postmodern snapshooters are undeniably "pictures," no matter how hard everybody tried to accept them they just didn't look like art. A postmodern photograph by Stephen Shore or Bill Owens or Larry Fink looks funny hanging next to a Cézanne still life or even an Ansel Adams landscape. But put up one of Penn's cigarette butts instead, and the problem vanishes.

If Szarkowski's claim were true, Penn would indeed be a breakthrough figure in photography. However, his evaluation

of Penn's career presents us with a kind of ersatz breakthrough—one that reflects the legerdemain of the critic rather than the skill of the photographer. Pictures like Penn's Ektachrome still lifes of frozen foods and iridescent decaying flowers have a stark, unequivocal modernist look, and the brusqueness and clarity of the images show how distinctly Penn has broken with fashion photography's baroque stylistic conventions. But they are much more in the mainstream of art photography than Szarkowski is willing to admit. By taking the driftwood, the fruit baskets, and the birdcages out of his pictures and replacing them with lighting cables, frayed raty carpet, and bare gray backdrops, Penn hasn't transcended pictorialism—he has merely exchanged one form of artifice for another, one brand of pictorialism for another. (With his bleached-out, dehumanized nudes Penn could be called the Edward Weston of fashion photography.) In his fashion pictures and his personal work his concerns, like those of his art-photography predecessors, are both photographic *and* painterly—a point Szarkowski seems to ignore. Where Penn and his predecessors differ is in their choice of sources and the temper of their sensibilities:

THE SENSIBILITIES of the old masters of fashion photography and the rebellious mavericks who followed them are radically different, and these differences are displayed most vividly in their attitudes toward the content of their fashion pictures. There is a critique, a trenchant commentary on the cult of beauty and glamour and art-world hauteur, built into the fashion pictures of Avedon and Penn. A picture like Edward Steichen's famous photograph of three models dressed in white and posed with a white horse, or Man Ray's surrealist picture of a sleekly outfitted beauty lounging in a wheelbarrow, gently pokes fun at the absurdity of fashion and the outrageous lengths to which it is driven in the pursuit of something ever more stylish and daring. But the criticism of fashion and fashion photography in their pictures is closer to parody; it is playful and good-natured. (Helmut Newton's sultry pictures, with their rhinestone chains, black leather, and riding crops, satirize fashion photography in much the same way.) It doesn't have the acrid, moralistic flavor that you get from the fashion pictures of Avedon and Penn. Avedon and Penn seem to want us to feel

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guilty about the opulence and beauty on display in their photographs. Their fashion photographs—for example, the pictures that Avedon took in the fifties contrasting the rarefied, artificial perfection of his models with the “ugliness” of normal people—point out the ludicrous triviality at the heart of the fashion business. There is, as well, a distinct hint of misogyny in their fashion pictures. Penn’s models may be alluring, but he emphasizes their self-absorbed beauty in a way that makes them seem cold and inhuman: they’re desirable but inaccessible.

Both photographers appear also to offer their serious work, the pictures they take for themselves, as a counterpoint to the ones that they take on assignment for their commercial employers. Avedon’s studies of the ravages of age and disease, of blotchy skin and collapsed profiles—usually those of celebrities and artists—are, like Penn’s unforgiving images of bulging fatties, reactions against the uniform flawlessness of the young and preternaturally attractive men and women who pose for his fashion layouts. But there is an important difference between Avedon’s interests and Penn’s. You feel that Avedon takes his probing, unflattering portraits, which are shot head-on in the white glare of an electric strobe, because it allows him to confront certain truths about life, its unavoidable cruelty and unpleasantness, which in the day-to-day pursuit of his career as a fashion artist are cosmetically softened, painted over. But Avedon’s private and commercial work are more of a piece than one might think. His main criticism of fashion is its dishonesty. His pictures suggest that fashion photography may be an art but because it has cut itself off from the real world it is a moribund one. In both his portraits and his fashion pictures one can feel his struggle to push against the constraints of his profession, to strip away the artifice and let life in.

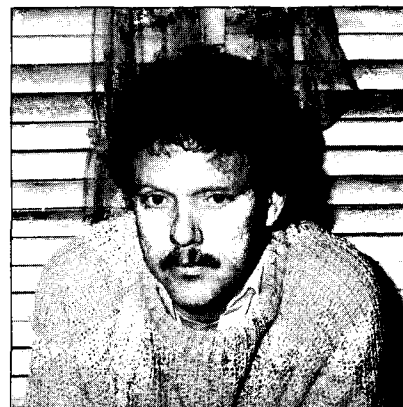
Penn’s pictures are set in the sealed-off world of art. The light that Penn throws on his portrait subjects is like the north light of the painter’s studio, which often casts the sitter’s face partially in shadow, obscuring his features. Most of his portraits aren’t unflattering (though some of the recent flaw-magnifying, microscopic portraits that he took for *Vanity Fair* are), but they’re not myth-making either. The most curious and off-putting aspect of them is how little interested Penn seems in the personalities of his

subjects. The neutral, austere style he has adopted isn’t designed to accomplish what is thought to be the primary concern of the portrait artist—to capture something of the subject’s inner self. Instead, Penn positions himself emotionally at a middle distance from his subjects, examining them dispassionately, almost as objects, to be admired more for their abstract visual qualities (the herringbone pattern of Evelyn Waugh’s jacket, the ghostly, parchment-like texture of Colette’s skin, the walrusy bristle of David Smith’s moustache) than for their human ones. Some personalities—those of S. J. Perelman, Carson McCullers, John Marin, and, ironically, Saul Steinberg, whose face in Penn’s picture is covered with a cardboard mask—come through, but the others seem of little more interest to him than his street trash and steel blocks. There is an austerity and rigor to Avedon’s work, too, but you can’t imagine Penn taking a picture that has the raw animal vigor that Avedon’s portraits of Anna Magnani and Bert Lahr have.

In 1933 the Hungarian photographer Martin Munkasci, who had worked in Europe as a photojournalist, created a sensation in *Harper’s Bazaar* with his picture of a model in a bathing suit running toward him on the beach. It was, as his editor Carmel Snow remembers, “the first action photograph made for fashion.” Munkasci’s pictures celebrate women’s bodies in motion and capture the excitement of being dressed up and out in the world. They express the same values of clarity, craft, and design that Szarkowski has so lavishly praised in Penn’s work. But because Munkasci wasn’t as concerned as Penn and Szarkowski are with photography’s status as an art, he didn’t drain all the life out of his pictures. The liveliness and immediacy of his images break up the equation that Szarkowski has constructed between artistic seriousness and artistic achievement and illustrate what a theoretical corner he has painted himself into.

In the end Penn’s work refers only to itself. Everything he places before his camera is given the same high-art gloss. Looking at his pictures, one feels that they were taken by a man whose true passions are reserved for the contrast of textures and colors and the play of light and shadow—for whom style is an end in itself and who has very little real curiosity about people or life or the world outside of art. □

March report on ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS BOOKS



AIDA LALEIAN

Not for twenty years, since the mature work of James Dickey began to capture the imagination of readers, has there been a new poet like **Rodney Jones**, whose sense of America, its corn-fed past and its neon-rinsed present, rings with a sound as closely tuned to American speech as a five-string banjo.

His first book, *The Story They Told Us of Light*, was chosen by the late Elizabeth Bishop to win a poetry contest. Poems in his second book, **The Unborn**, have appeared in *The Atlantic*, one of them in the February issue. Jones’s fellow poets praise his remarkable accomplishment:

“Brilliant”—Donald Justice.

“Thoreau and Edison are visionary spirits who preside over **The Unborn**.”—Dave Smith.

“A surprising young poet, one of the best of his generation.”—David Wagoner.

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BOOKS



A PRE-WAR IDYLL

BY ANTHONY BURGESS

THIS REAL NIGHT
by Rebecca West. Viking, \$16.95.

DAME REBECCA, since her death, at the age of ninety, in 1983, has suffered the resurrection of her personality in a rather remote historical context. Anthony West, her and H. G. Wells's illegitimate son, has been enabled to write candidly about her sexual relationship with the man who offered his sexual favors to all comers, the young and beautiful Rebecca West being among the first. More important, the long-withheld postscript to Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography*, which deals openly with his erotic life, has been permitted publication (by Anthony West's half brother, G. P. Wells), and Rebecca West is one of the principal characters. There is a danger that this character—ebullient, sexy, not yet respectable—may overshadow her real achievement in the field of letters. Fortunately, *This Real Night* has come out as a reminder of West's large intelligence and talent. She is blazoned in the publisher's blurb as "one of the greatest writers of this century," but that claim goes too far. Her association with Wells was as close as she got to real greatness. Dame Rebecca was a graceful and thoughtful writer—at her best in *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, her study of Yugoslavia, and in *The New Meaning of*

Treason, which dealt profoundly with a theme troubling to the British in the Cold War era. Despite the continuing vitality of her first fiction, *The Return of the Soldier* (made recently into a very acceptable film), her situation as a novelist seems to be in some doubt.

It is always dangerous for a male writer to make judgments on the fiction of the other sex. Women writers seem to me to have certain advantages over the male—a sharper eye for the external world, along with a much wider vocabulary of color, an interest in the close notation of manners and dress, and, of course, concern with the deeper and more tender emotions—but they lack a willingness, or an ability, to make their fiction move. H. G. Wells would have been the first to praise the sensuousness and sly wit of *This Real Night*, but he would have asked legitimate questions: When is this novel going to start working its way toward a declared intention? What is the novel *about*? In other words, where is the plot?

This Real Night was intended as the second volume of a trilogy that began in 1957 with *The Fountain Overflows*—produced so long ago that it is difficult in memory to attach it to its successor (happily, a reprint is about to be published). The middle section of an unfinished trilogy has to have singular virtues to stand on its own. The virtues of *This Real Night* are considerable, but they are not those of a fully shaped novel. Nor do they suggest a novel that is not really intended to be a novel, like something by Virginia Woolf.

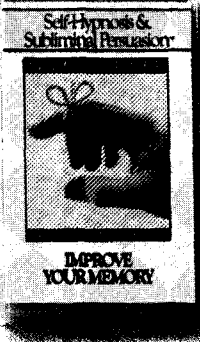
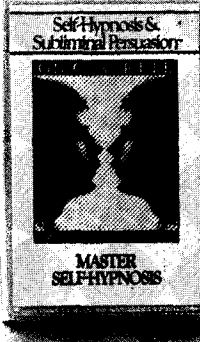
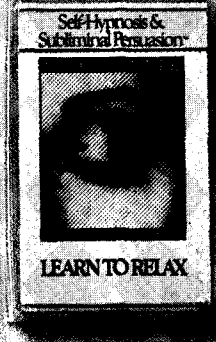
The title presumably refers to the Great War of 1914–1918, which erupts at the end of the book. Before it we have the pleasure of living in a leafy and flow-

ery neo-Georgian England that is not unlike that of Wells's Mr. Britling. The story is told by Rose Aubrey, a young woman learning, along with her twin sister, Mary, to become a concert pianist, like their mother before them. The mother's achievement lies in the past, the daughters' in the future: we are caught in between. There is another sister, Cordelia, and a brother, named Richard Quin, and also a cousin called Rosamund. The father of the family, a higher journalist, has left, not because of a failure of affection but because of an inability to conquer his own weakness: we gather he was something of a gambler. There is a kind of father-substitute in Mr. Morpurgo, a wealthy Jewish gentleman of refined tastes and great kindness, and an uncle-substitute who keeps an inn called the Dog and Duck, on the rural Thames. The quasi-idyllic scene of pre-war life in a London suburb is well caught at the very beginning:

It was warm as high summer, and bars of sunshine lay honey-coloured across the floor, the air above them shimmering with motes; and bees droned about a purple branch of viburnum in a vase on the mantelpiece. . . . We sat in the sunlit room as much at ease as if we had been flowers instead of girls.

The flower motif is a constant one. Mr. Morpurgo, who admired the girls' mother in her platform days, expresses his affection for the family in gifts of cut blooms, far too many. Flowers may be beautiful, but they do not do anything. The flower-girls and their mother and brother talk, entertainingly, but the talk fails to adumbrate even the ghost of a plot. Now, we don't doubt that a novel has to establish tone and present live people (Dame Rebecca's people are very

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much alive), but there ought to be a suggestion that something significant is going to happen, apart from a great war. The Aubrey family has a long luncheon with the Murgos, and there is talk of art. Then the scene changes to the Dog and Duck, at Harplewood on the Thames.

The connection with this inn and its family comes from a school acquaintance, Nancy Phillips, whose mother has poisoned her father but has been saved from the hangman's noose by the polemics of the absent and possibly dead Mr. Aubrey. The imprisoned Mrs. Phillips's sister, Lily, works as a barmaid at the Dog and Duck, and the landlord, Uncle Len Darcy, thinks highly of the Aubreys because of the father. Here is another aspect of the pre-war idyll. The lower orders can, with enterprise and personality, make their way: the authority of an inn landlord is no mean thing. Uncle Len and the aristocracy meet in an appreciation of well-bred horseflesh and, by extension, good human stock. The aristocracy is acceptable as a kind of stable of pedigreed beasts with well-cared-for coats. The weather is always fine in the rich Home Counties country that surrounds the Dog and Duck, there is food in excess, all crops are bumper. The only breath of evil is to be met in the public bar on a Saturday night, when a rogue tries to pass a dud five-pound note and nearly gets a broken beer glass thrust in his face.

Back in winter London the Aubrey girls get down to their pianistic studies. Dame Rebecca is very accurate indeed in representing the agonies of fingering and scales, the hopes and despairs of the aspirant. Then we get the following:

We were not surprised when the war came, for we had heard our father prophesying it all through our childhood. . . . We had also been warned by our music. Great music is in a sense serene; it is certain of the values it asserts. But it is also in terror, because those values are threatened, and it is not certain whether they will triumph in this world, and of course music is a missionary effort to colonise earth for imperialistic heaven. So we were not so sorely stricken by August, 1914, as many other people. Indeed we had our consolations. It was proved to us that music was not making a fuss about nothing, and that the faces of our parents had been distorted out of common placidity not by madness but by the genuine spirit of prophecy.

One does not quite know how to take this, or indeed whether to take it at all. In what way are the values of music threatened? What are these values? Can music really warn in this way? We have here a brilliant intellectual speculation, not untypical, which refuses to yield to analysis. It also seems to justify a curiously heartless attitude toward what comes with August, 1914. Richard Quin, the brother, is going to be killed. It is foreseen, possibly by the music, and it happens. Then, after a brief and implausible illness, the mother dies. The pre-war English idyll is over. We wait for the story to continue, but Dame Rebecca died without giving us more.

The confusion of the final episodes is curious and uncharacteristic. Dame Rebecca had painted a very accurate pre-war middle-class England. Then she seems to have confounded it with a later pre-war England. She has dart-playing in pubs in 1914. My youth was spent in pubs, and if my experience be any warrant, darts did not come in till the middle thirties. The Aubrey family has ration cards three years before rationing was introduced. The term *enemy* is strangely diminished: "The enemy in our household was what made cakes burn when they had been in the oven not nearly so long as the cookery book said they should be, what gave one a cold just before a concert."

But the major problem of the novel is perhaps the problem that faces all writers who think it enough to present character and atmosphere. In *Ulysses* Joyce demonstrated that you could show the current of daily life without much of a plot as long as you found a plot-substitute—in his case a complex symbolic structure. *This Real Night* has none of that: it reads like part of an exceptionally well composed memoir whose backbone is nothing more than time (and not the philosophical time of Proust). The book says, This is what it was like to live then if you had talent, sensibility, and a little money.

In her second novel, *The Judge*, written when she was Wells's mistress, during the early days of the Great War, Rebecca West, in Wells's view, ruined the structure by not thinking her plot through to the logical finish. In her critical book *The Strange Necessity* Wells was lampooned for a certain slickness and vulgarity. (This led to the end of the relationship.) Rebecca West needed more of that vulgarity: exquisiteness, like patriotism, is not enough. □

THE WORLD VIEW OF THE RIGHT

BY PHILIP GEYELIN

GRAVE NEW WORLD
by Michael A. Ledeen.
Oxford, \$17.95.

IN THEIR WISDOM the Founding Fathers could think of no way to provide for perfection, so they settled for the next best thing: freedom. That's not good enough for Michael Ledeen and the influential school of policy-thinkers he represents. It's too messy and much too risky for the "grave new world" the United States faces in the 1980s.

Reflecting the view of a respectable body of conservative and neo-conservative opinion, Ledeen believes that the Soviet Union presents ever more of an expansionist threat. The threat is prompted not only by revolutionary ideology but also by an internal economic and social crisis of unpredictable duration and with no discernible solution. The paradoxical effect of this crisis is to drive the Kremlin to increasingly aggressive, not to say desperate, external adventurism by way of diverting its people from what's wrong at home.

Ledeen concedes that we know little about what is going on inside the Soviet Union and still less about how to influence that country in ways that would reduce its contribution to the grave new world he perceives. He takes some comfort in the thought that the American social and political structure is solid by comparison with that of the Soviets, but he is absolutely convinced that as a people we are simply not constituted, by the very nature of our society and our political institutions and a general permissiveness and absence of discipline, to conduct a serious foreign policy.

We are afflicted by compulsively litigious lawyers, bad law, wrongheaded judges, and a suffocating, unresponsive, uncreative bureaucracy. Our Presidents come unprepared for the job. The public is both uninterested and uninformed. The national "elite" is misguided and remote from reality. The menace of the media cannot be overstated. Even if we could define sound policies, they would be of no use without a constancy, coher-

Philip Geyelin is a columnist for The Washington Post.

ence, and resolve that everything in our system conspires against.

So far, Ledeen is making a familiar conservative case. He is a recognized student of contemporary foreign policy, an expert on terrorism and the intelligence arts. There is no way of knowing how much of his frustration with the system is due to his brief service in the State Department, as an adviser on terrorism to Secretary of State Alexander Haig. His concerns, as opposed to his remedies, are neither eccentric nor frivolous; you will find them in the writings of Henry Kissinger, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Walter Laqueur, and Edward Luttwak, among others, to whom he pays tribute in his acknowledgments. You will find them down through the years, as well; in one way or another George Kennan, Walter Lippmann, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Dean Rusk, and even Dean Acheson expressed exasperation, not to say despair, over the vexations of conducting a consistent foreign policy in an open society.

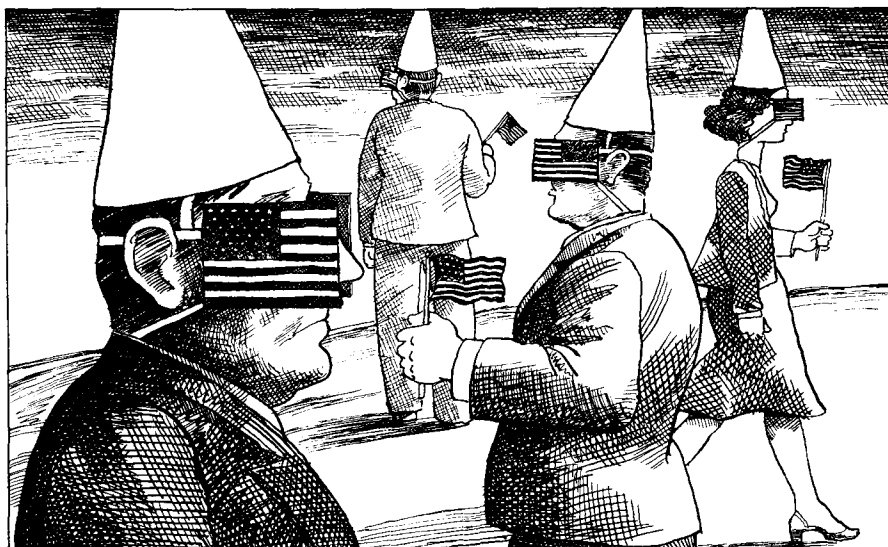
What is novel about Ledeen is the degree of his desperation: "The question before the nation today is whether we can find the individuals capable of leading us, and put them in a position to do it," he writes. "As things currently stand, it seems impossible to achieve this with our own people." He means it literally; because of his high regard for Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski, he would actively recruit foreigners, or those of foreign origin, to the American policy-making process. He would even appoint them to posts as sensitive as that of national-security adviser to the President. Ledeen believes that these imported personages would somehow operate free of domestic political pressures, though what would provide this cosseted condition he does not explain. He says only that they would have "no vested interests in the Washington political game"—even while playing it.

No less radical is Ledeen's way of dealing with the inadequacy of our presidential candidates. He would not allow presidential campaign organizations to be put in place until one year before Election Day. The idea is that this hiatus would give the candidates more time to study up on foreign affairs, free of "the necessity of making pronouncements all the time"—as if this were a burden for presidential candidates. Something in the Constitution about the right of assembly and free expression would seem to me to be at war with

whatever means Ledeen has in mind for decreeing this one-year limit on presidential campaigns. Would an incumbent President running for re-election be similarly circumscribed?

Nothing short of a constitutional convention would be required to realize Ledeen's ends, and the First Amendment would probably have to be scrapped. Congress's role in making foreign policy would be next. Ledeen has a dream: "The most desirable relationship between the president and Congress would be one in which the general discussion of foreign policy problems was conducted at the outset of an administration, the outlines of policy were agreed on, and then Congress stepped back and permitted the president to conduct that policy." Ledeen does have

pete—vigorously, sometimes unfairly, often to excess and with shoddy goods. It is impossible to have a serious foreign policy, he argues, when leaks of sensitive information have become a "basic weapon in the debate over foreign policy." But only in passing does he acknowledge that the impulse for most leaks comes from competing policy-makers. Unable to live with the messiness of the real world, he spins a wearisome conspiracy theory. The media are in league with the lawyers and the judges, and never mind that the judges send journalists to jail for refusing to betray their sources. "The leaders of the Fourth Estate suffer from the same lack of understanding of the world that besets the other members of our policy elite as well as from the abstract moral-



the realism to admit that this is "easier said in the abstract than done in the real world."

The same could be said for his prescriptions for the media: it "must" stop treating foreign policy as part of domestic political debate and it "must recognize that there are such things as national interests," or else "we are doomed to the continued politicization of foreign policy, and this is a prescription for folly, unpredictability, and disaster." What sort of representative democracy, one wonders, is capable of depoliticizing foreign policy?

His bill of particulars against the press is seriously flawed by an unwillingness to accept the natural order—and disorder—of free institutions. He sees the media "competing with foreign intelligence services for American secrets," as if they were not merely competing in the way that free enterprises tend to com-

pete—vigorously, sometimes unfairly, often to excess and with shoddy goods. Ledeen laments. After all, they come from the same background and have attended the same universities as the policy-makers; they march to the same (unidentified) drummer. This is nonsense to anybody who has spent any time in the news business. One has only to attend the annual conferences of the various media trade associations to perceive the infinite variety of the practitioners.

Ledeen has his finger on a real problem: "Americans aren't much interested in foreign news, except insofar as it affects them directly and dramatically." But when he goes on to complain that American foreign correspondents tend to look for American "angles" in order to catch the attention of the American public, he invites the question of how he would go about force-feeding readers and viewers with minutiae of remote in-

ternational affairs if nobody will read, watch, or listen.

Ledeen cites familiar cases to support his view that the press is the enemy of a serious foreign policy. Coverage of the Lebanese war was unfair to Israel: the civilian casualties were exaggerated, the blame for the massacres at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps was put on Israel rather than the Christian militiamen directly responsible. Not nearly the same attention was paid to Syrian atrocities at Hama. Not nearly enough attention is paid, generally, to Communist brutality; American press criticism focuses too much on our friends, particularly anti-Communist, authoritarian friends like Chile and the Philippines. The media, to borrow a line from Jeane Kirkpatrick at the Republican Convention, are always blaming America first. But when Ledeen makes this complaint, he forgets that in his assault on American institutions he is doing precisely the same thing. Like other conservative critics, he has a curious way of wanting the media to hold those nations we favor or aid in the name of anti-communism to standards no higher than those of the Soviets and their surrogates.

Ledeen is much more persuasive when he is talking about real problems to which, over time, American foreign policy will have to adjust: wars fought by proxies, subversion, terrorism, guerrilla insurgency. But if these threats make for a grave new world it is new only in the sense that Ledeen has newly discovered it; Kissinger was making the same points while he was in office, without being quite ready to propose the sorts of remedies that Ledeen insists are necessary.

Ledeen's approach is not so different from that of a number of polemicists long accustomed to being able to say and think impossible things for which they are obliged to take no responsibility. Ronald Reagan was in just that position in his General Electric radio broadcasts for many years—it seemed there was scarcely a center of opposition to U.S. interests anywhere in the world that he wasn't prepared to blockade or bomb. But he has apparently come to accept the inhibitions imposed on doers, as distinct from disengaged conceptualists. Besides, as President he at least has a sense of being able to make things happen.

My own observation of the first truly conservative Administration in the post-war years is that the staying power and

dedication to public service of its true-believing policy-makers—witness the torment of Ambassador Kirkpatrick—is in direct proportion to the degree of influence they have on policy. Perhaps the country has done itself a disservice, however inadvertently, by excluding the Ledeens of the world from the discipline of having to practice in public office what they have been preaching from the sidelines. Those who try to search for pragmatic solutions will recognize that most of the problems that Ledeen poses are inescapable defects, and perhaps latent strengths, of the experiment in freedom bequeathed to us by the Founding Fathers. □

THE ART OF CRITICISM

BY LEO BERSANI

HENRY JAMES: Literary Criticism
edited by Leon Edel and Mark Wilson.
The Library of America,
2 vols., \$27.50 each.

THE PUBLICATION, by the Library of America, of a complete edition of Henry James's literary criticism should help to establish James as not only our greatest novelist but also our most comprehensive and original critic. These two volumes, the latest addition to an already distinguished series of classic American authors, constitute a major publishing event. For the first time all of James's literary essays, reviews, prefaces, and critical commentaries of varying lengths have been brought together; about one third of the material has never before been published in book form. The first volume includes essays on literature, American writers, and English writers. The second volume brings together James's reflections on French and other European writers, and closes with the 1907–1909 prefaces to the New York edition of James's fiction.

Even a cursory first reading of this enormous body of Jamesian criticism (each volume contains more than 1,300 pages) will reveal considerable grounds for admiration—and, I'm afraid, almost

Leo Bersani is a professor of French at the University of California at Berkeley. His books include A Future for Ascyanax and Baudelaire and Freud.

equally considerable grounds for objection and offense. If only as a relief from both the frequently narrow range of aesthetic reference and the compartmentalization of criticism today (are you a structuralist? a post-structuralist? a deconstructionist? a post-deconstructionist? an enthusiast of *Rezeptionsästhetik*? a reader-response person?), one can't help but find James refreshingly eclectic and cosmopolitan. His critical approach was at once biographical, sociological, moral, philosophical, and formalistic. James's criticism often reads like a particularly sophisticated handbook for the aspiring writer. The essays are full of technical recommendations and considerations: on the dangers of first-person narration, on the different values to be gotten from dialogue and from narrative summary or description (the "scenic" blocks, or passages of dialogue, in a novel should be "illustrative"; the "pictorial," or passages of narrative, are "constructive"), and on the constraints inherent in "the very short story" that make of it "one of the costliest . . . forms of composition in general use." James's prefaces, in particular, are characterized by an anti-interpretive—more precisely, an anti-referential—purity, a tendency to discuss character and situation almost entirely as functions of technical ingenuities.

I will be returning to this apparently mechanical view of novelistic invention. Here it is enough to note that it comfortably coexists with what could be thought of today as wholly incompatible approaches to art. James treats the literary work, for example, as only one of its own hermeneutic contexts. Thus Hawthorne's life in mid-nineteenth-century Concord, Balzac's financial speculations, George Eliot's years with George Henry Lewes at "the sequestered precinct of the Priory in London," were for James as much "texts" in their careers as are *The House of the Seven Gables*, *Le Père Goriot*, and *Daniel Deronda*. Nothing could be further from James than Proust's insistence on the profound ontological difference between the artist's biographical self and the self in his work, an insistence that initiated in much twentieth-century criticism something like a superstitious horror of any step out of the writer's work and into the rest of his life. For James such steps were never crudely explanatory (as they were in Sainte-Beuve, whom, however, James, unlike Proust, greatly admired). The only test of achievement in art, James consistently maintained, is the test of execution.

Even James's reservations about Hawthorne, which appear to trace the works' limitations (as James sees them) to Hawthorne's impoverished cultural resources (and therefore to a kind of biographical fatality), were in fact based on what James took to be Hawthorne's very limited or superficial use of the personal and cultural material that *was* available to him—most notably, the puritanical conscience and the puritanical milieu of a New England town.

JAMES'S ATTENTION to biographical data can perhaps best be understood as an aspect of his extraordinary interest in the circumstances of art. I call this interest extraordinary in part because of a current of indifference to circumstances in his fiction, a tendency to dismiss the circumstantial altogether, and to propose—the most extreme case is that of Milly Theale, in *The Wings of the Dove*—a form of coercive spirituality freed from all biographical, material, and cultural constraints and conditions, a spirituality unintelligible, finally, in the very terms (or constraints and conditions) of literature itself. But in his criticism James was constantly asking himself about the field that circumstances trace for art. There is the field of personal circumstances, and there is also the sociological field traced by historical circumstances. James's willingness to write so many reviews, to consider so many writers who are not only unread today but were thought of as minor or negligible in their own day, becomes understandable as a sign of his immense interest in the changing conditions of novelistic production. "The future of fiction," James wrote in 1899, "is intimately bound up with the future of the society that produces and consumes it." Like Mallarmé's, James's most intimate sense of literature was offended by the "contemporary deluge" of books for an ever increasing mass audience. But, again like Mallarmé, James—signally different in this respect from his detractors, who frequently manage to accuse him of being a mandarin while they themselves deplore the advent of television as an offense to culture—couldn't help but find in the very vulgarization of art exciting new possibilities for the marvelously voracious novelistic imagination:

It is assuredly true that literature for the billion will not be literature as we have hitherto known it at its best. But if the billion give the pitch of production and circulation, they do some-

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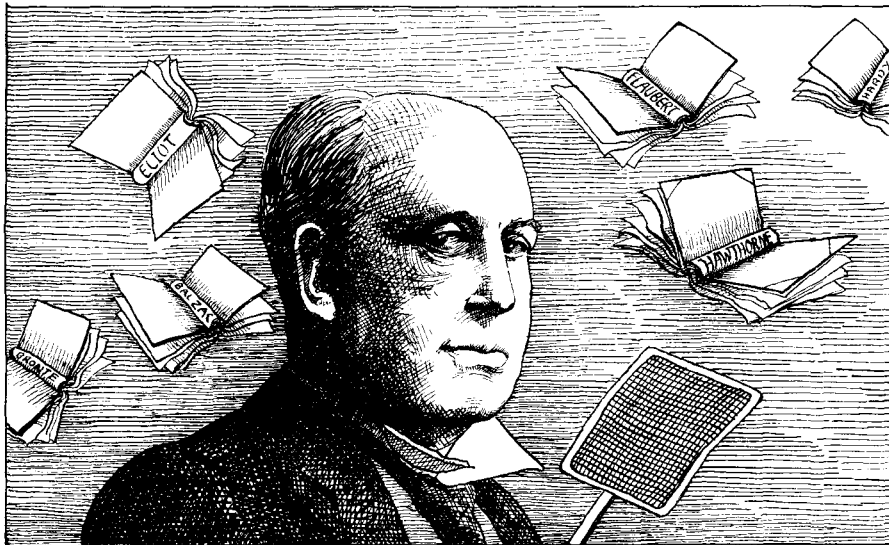
thing else besides; they hang before us a wide picture of opportunities—opportunities that would be opportunities still even if, reduced to the *minimum*, they should be only those offered by the vastness of the implied habitat and the complexity of the implied history. It is impossible not to entertain with patience and curiosity the presumption that life so colossal must break into expression at points of proportionate frequency. These places, these moments will be the chances.

The beautiful liberality of this passage makes me hesitate to approach the depressingly illiberal aspects of James's literary criticism. I refer principally to his judgments of other writers, judgments that not only seem wrong to us today but often also strike us as quite un-

ing class—no Epsom nor Ascot! Some such list as that might be drawn up of the absent things in American life.

If, as James maintained, "it takes a great deal of history to produce a little literature" and "a complex social machinery to set a writer into motion," then poor Hawthorne (James presumably saved himself by moving to Europe) was obviously doomed from the start. Actually, the book has more-interesting things to say about American life than this famous page would suggest. James spoke acutely, for example, of "the exaggerated homage rendered to authorship" in a country without a literary class; the excessive veneration of the writer is itself a sign of cultural provincialism. And, in trying to define the quality of social life in an environment in

tralizng or corrupting effect of literary images and literary play on any moral intensity is in fact obviously intended to relegate Hawthorne to the minor leagues. Hawthorne treated the Puritan consciousness "of the fearful nature of our responsibilities and the savage character of our Taskmaster . . . from the poetic and aesthetic point of view, the point of view of entertainment and irony." He was merely a "man of fancy," one with "no appreciable philosophy at all—no general views that were in the least uncomfortable." The "passionless" author of *The Scarlet Letter* managed to make the Puritan soul merely "picturesque." "His beautiful, light imagination is the wing that on the autumn evening just brushes the dusky window. . . . On the surface—the surface of the soul and the edge of the tragedy—he preferred to remain. He lingered, to weave his web, in the thin exterior air His collection of moral mysteries is the cabinet of a dilettante."



generously wrong. The major case here would, I suppose, be the book on Hawthorne, a work whose judgments I find somewhat less crude than they are generally thought to be. There is of course the silly (or is it deliberately satirical, as Richard Poirier has suggested?) enumeration of all those "items of high civilization" missing from American life:

No State, in the European sense of the word, and indeed barely a specific national name. No sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service, no country gentlemen, no palaces, no castles, nor manors, nor old country-houses, nor parsonages, nor thatched cottages nor ivied ruins; no cathedrals, nor abbeys, nor little Norman churches; no great Universities nor public schools—no Oxford, nor Eton, nor Harrow; no literature, no novels, no museums, no pictures, no political society, no sport-

which "introspection, thanks to the want of other entertainment, played almost the part of a social resource," James quoted a passage from Hawthorne's notebooks in which Hawthorne wrote of a recent visitor who had informed him that the Transcendentalist Margaret Fuller "has risen perceptibly into a higher state since their last meeting." James added, "There is probably a great deal of Concord five-and-thirty years ago in that little sentence!"

But what James was really suggesting about Hawthorne was that, inasmuch as he failed to make the highest use of even those resources available to him, he wouldn't have been a greater writer in Europe. Nothing is stranger—or more disturbing—in James's study of Hawthorne than his continual emphasis on Hawthorne's "lightness." What might have been an interesting argument about the perhaps inevitably neu-

WAS JAMES, AS some contemporary critics have suggested, using the monograph on Hawthorne to stake out his own place as the greatest American novelist? What might be called the oedipal-machismo argument is that James had to get rid of his cultural father in order to reign unchallenged in the American household of fiction. But then what are we to make of his misjudgments of European writers? "Baudelaire had a certain groping sense of the moral complexities of life, and if the best that he succeeds in doing is to drag them down into the very turbid element in which he himself plashes and flounders, and there present them to us much besmirched and bespattered, this was not a want of goodwill in him, but rather a dulness and permanent immaturity of vision." The popularity of *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* was due to the public's sentimental interest in the circumstances of the lives of the Brontë sisters; their success "embodies, really, the most complete intellectual muddle, if the term be not extravagant, ever achieved, on a literary question, by our wonderful public."

Even James's admirations tended to be either severely qualified or very slow in coming or bizarrely misplaced. He compared Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* unfavorably with John Gibson Lockhart's *Adam Blair*; George Eliot's "delightfully feminine" talent and merely

"microscopic observation" were—at least in 1866—set against the "great synthetic guesses" of that "real master" Charles Reade, "the most readable of living English novelists" and in his genius "a distant kinsman of Shakespeare."

It is true that with time James became more appreciative of Eliot, and of Flaubert. It is nonetheless troubling to find so many narrow and unsympathetic readings of writers whose artistic temperaments—unlike those of Baudelaire, Whitman, and Hardy, about whom James was ferocious—obviously had much in common with James's. In 1876, almost twenty years after the publication of *Madame Bovary*, James was still listing Flaubert among "the minor French novelists" and placing his talent far below "the great imagination—the metaphysical imagination" of the "still unsurpassed" George Sand. To the very end James remained resolutely blind to the originality of *L'Education sentimentale* (not to mention *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, which he saw as "a mistake of the tragic sort"), and he began his long preface to a 1902 English translation of *Madame Bovary* by announcing that Flaubert was "more interesting . . . as a failure however qualified than as a success however explained."

Even Balzac, whom James in 1905 called "the master of us all," was something of an acquired taste. There were marvelous sides to James's growing appreciation—more precisely, his growing awe—of Balzac. I'm thinking, for example, of his touchingly frank envy of Balzac's ability to combine "quantity and intensity": "where, with so strenuous a conception of the use of material, was material itself so strenuously quarried?" James moved far indeed from his early sense of Balzac as "morally and intellectually so superficial," and yet in 1913 he was still deploring Balzac's inability to treat "the highest kinds of temper, the inward life of the mind, the cultivated consciousness." I'm not sure what this means except that Balzac failed to invent Milly Theale and Maggie Verver; he did, however, create Henriette de Mortsau in *Le Lys dans la vallée*, a novel of excruciatingly cultivated spiritual discriminations about which James remained singularly obtuse. His failure to appreciate either that work or the very different *Le Peau de chagrin* is—to this reader of Balzac, at any rate—tantamount to missing about half of Balzac's greatness.

HAVING POSED THE terms for a potentially terrible indictment of James's criticism, I hasten to add—all perversely, as James might put it—that I don't find these mistakes of judgment very important. They testify to the irrelevance of a certain type of critical failure to what may be the essential nature of critical practice. Judgment is clearly important because it sustains literature institutionally—it is the crucial critical faculty in the development and the maintenance of a literary canon. But in serving this function aesthetic judgment depends on a comparatively secure distinction between art and criticism, a distinction that James's criticism at its best puts into question.

James suggests, first of all, that art is already criticism. Consider his deep attachment to his center-of-consciousness method, a method by which the novel's action is always seen through "somebody's excited and concentrated feeling about something," and which, it seems to me, subverts the aesthetic of representational realism that it is meant to serve. A center contributes to a story, as James writes in his preface to *The Golden Bowl*, "mainly a certain amount of criticism and interpretation of it." But is it merely "a certain amount"? *The Ambassadors*—to take the best-known example of James's method—is in fact *nothing but* the story of a single character's (Strether's) education in interpretation. Fiction as James understood it does not exactly represent life; its subject is rather a critical process: "the affair of the painter is not the immediate, it is the reflected field of life, the realm not of application, but of *appreciation*. . . ."

This involves us in some interesting tautologies. In defending his use of intelligent centers in the preface to *The Princess Casamassima*, James wrote:

The teller of a story is primarily, none the less, the listener to it, the reader of it, too; and, having needed thus to make it out, distinctly, on the crabbed page of life, to disengage it from the rude human character and the more or less gothic text in which it has been packed away, the very essence of his affair has been the *imputing* of intelligence. The basis of his attention has been that such and such an imbroglio had got started—on the page of life—because of something that some one had felt and more or less understood.

Thus, for James, the author is always the first center of consciousness (before, that is, the character who serves that

function in the novel), and the work of fiction could be thought of as taking for its subject the very process of critical appreciation by which it was conceived.

Criticism proper takes this process of appreciation one step further. It is, so to speak, a further fold in the interpretive or self-reflective consciousness. In James's prefaces to the New York edition of his novels, this can sometimes mean a reflection on the analogies between the meaning of a work of fiction and the circumstances in which James conceived it—between, for example, the crucial question in *Portrait of a Lady* of how Isabel Archer will use her financial and imaginative resources and the question James had to face of what kind of situation to invent for an "unattached character," to fill out his originally somewhat thin "conception of a certain young woman affronting her destiny."

In his prefaces James at times went so far as to suggest that the meaning of the novel being discussed was nothing more significant than one of its own technical ingenuities. This may seem like a seriously limited aspect of James's criticism, but while some readers may find it hard to take, I think that it provides especially strong evidence of James's criticism as art. James's double use of Maggie Verver in *The Golden Bowl*, for example—both as a principal character (what he calls a "value intrinsic") and as a center of consciousness (a "compositional resource")—is repeated within the terms of the story as a tension between her being used as a mere convenience in the adulterous affair between her husband and Charlotte Stant and her insistence that she be thought of as a "value intrinsic," as the real center of the Prince's life. This analogy encourages us to see the relations among the characters as dramatic metaphors not of some larger meanings in life outside the novel but rather of certain technical ingenuities by which those relations have been instituted, sustained, and diversified.

This should not, however, be taken as narrowing the novel's significance. If James suggests that certain of his characters merely dramatize his critical consciousness of how he proceeded with the writing of this novel, it could also be said that the technical problem itself—how to use fictional characters, how to get the most value from them—is an extremely precise formulation of a more general moral issue (how people "place" and use and get value from one another). James's apparently most technical criticism

could therefore be thought of as offering us a professional novelist's version of such issues; it repeats the morality of art and of life as a kind of literary geometry. And in so doing it suggests the easy flow between those different stages of self-reflective consciousness that, at least partly for the sake of organizational clarity, we call life, art, and criticism.

The pleasure of perceiving these tau-tological designs may be the final grace of a critical consciousness. It is perhaps also the most intimate secret of James's criticism: the "fun," to use one of his favorite words, of what he called in de-

fining his revisions for the New York edition a "re-perusal, registered." The fun of becoming himself the appreciative center of his fictions. Criticism as the most refined stage of interpretive activity is also criticism as an especially refined art form, and at this stage it most fully justifies James's definition of criticism, written in his 1896 appreciation of James Russell Lowell, as "the most postponed and complicated of the arts, the last qualified for and arrived at, the one requiring behind it most maturity, most power to understand and compare." □

subara was born in Japan and is, like the young heroine of her novel, the daughter of a Shinto priest. The story is set in Kyoto during and immediately after the Japanese surrender in 1945. At the age of ten Saya is confronted by a totally new society, with innovations ranging from a shortage of food to the charms of chewing gum and Christianity, and she takes the upheaval with more composure than the surrounding adults. Their confusions and alarms are described by the author with a dry irony that does not preclude sympathy for people trying to behave correctly while the world ends. The conclusion of the tale risks Dickensian sentimentality and evades it, a move requiring both skill and courage on the part of Ms. Matsubara.

BRIEF REVIEWS



HOTEL DU LAC by Anita Brookner. *Pantheon*, \$13.95. Ms. Brookner's heroine is an English spinster who supports herself by writing chaste romantic novels for the amusement of lonely females. Edith Hope is, she claims, "a householder, a ratepayer, a good plain cook, and a deliverer of typescripts well before the deadline." These discreet virtues have recently failed her, however, and she has been bundled off to a hideously respectable Swiss hotel to sit out the scandal. It is hard to imagine any act that in these permissive times would require hibernation at the Hotel du Lac, but when Edith's misconduct is finally revealed, it proves to be suitably outrageous, entirely in character, and gloriously funny. The entire novel is funny and also gently sad. Ms. Brookner has a keen eye for the eccentric preoccupations of footloose women and describes them with sympathy as well as wit.

BARON PHILIPPE by Joan Littlewood. *Crown*, \$16.95. This book is presented as "The Autobiography of Baron Philippe de Rothschild," and Ms. Littlewood's part in it is never altogether clear, but regardless of how the collaboration actually worked, the result is entertaining. The Baron's serious, lifelong project has been the rehabilitation and promotion of the Mouton-Rothschild vineyards, an enterprise involving more risks, squabbles, plots, and counterplots than a mere table wine-bibber would suspect. When not attending his vines the Baron has experimented, expensively, with theater and film and racing cars. He has survived the Nazis,

translated Elizabethan poetry into French, and established a wine museum at Mouton. He has persistently chased, and usually caught, women. He has no complaints about lost money, and is as cheerfully unrepentant a rake as ever confessed in public. He is undoubtedly a man of phenomenal energy with a versatility of activities, and he is very good company.

THE BOURGEOIS AND THE BIBELOT by Rémy G. Saisselin. *Rutgers*, \$17.95. The author describes his work as an "essay" on the psychology of art collecting in the nineteenth century. "Essay" is a nicely chosen word—it relieves Mr. Saisselin of the historian's obligation to proceed by logical, well-documented steps and entitles him to hold a one-man bull session, introducing whatever points come handy and sharking up any evidence that looks useful. The method is justifiable in his case, because strict logic and relevant evidence are scarce in the area under his consideration—"this ambiguous space where love of possession, love of art, and social ambition meet." There certainly was during the 1800s a change in the kind of people who collected art, in the way they went about it, and to some extent in their reasons for doing it at all. Mr. Saisselin's ideas on the nature of the change and on its causes are stimulating and, when he gets to Bernard Berenson, splendidly irreverent.

CRANES AT DUSK by Hisako Matsubara. *Doubleday*, \$15.95. Although she lives in Cologne and writes in German, Ms. Mat-

NO OTHER PLACE by John Gould. *Norton*, \$12.95. Mr. Gould, the Maine humorist and antiquarian, has tried his hand at fiction. His lighthearted novel, set in Colonial times, is rich in strange and surprising bits of local history and crackles with salt-crusted Down East dialogue. It has, moreover, attractive characters and a plot that hinges on international territorial hanky-panky. It is altogether a charmer.

THE DISCOVERY OF KING ARTHUR by Geoffrey Ashe. *Doubleday*, \$18.95. Mr. Ashe is not the first historian to conclude that a real British ruler lurks behind the fantastic extravagances of Arthurian legend, but he is the first to locate a plausible and historically recorded candidate for the honor. He makes a good case for his man, and his account of tracking the fellow down is as intriguing as a detective story. Mr. Ashe's extensive research was sponsored by Debrett's Peerage, and an appendix offers the quid pro quo—a hat tip to the notion that the British royal family is descended from King Arthur. It need not be taken seriously.

THE MEMOIRS OF JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS edited and introduced by Phyllis Grosskurth. *Random House*, \$19.95. Symonds (1840–1893) was in his day a respected British literary man, one of those all-purpose types who turned out reviews, criticism, poetry, and history with unflagging and promiscuous industry. He also wrote his memoirs, which have remained, by his own direction, locked up and hitherto unpublished. He was a homosexual, and he wrote partly to explain and even, if possible, understand his situation, and partly in the hope that his account might at some future date prove useful. Sy-

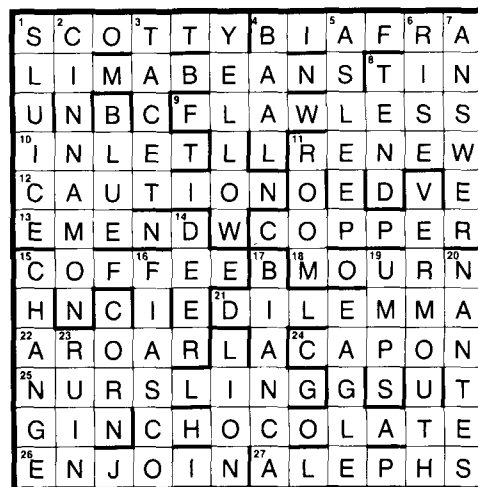
monds believed until a surprisingly late age that his sexual preferences were, if not unique, at least very rare—although how he could have carried such an idea through Harrow and Oxford is a mystery. There is in fact a good deal of mystery throughout the work, for Symonds had to invent his own terminology and this practical problem is complicated, for a modern reader, by his admitted inclination to be “too high-flown in rhetoric” (translation: to blather). Despite its exasperating elements his memoir is interesting for its revelation of Victorian thinking, and it is often touching in its description of the author’s bewilderment, frustration, and plain misery.

DOUBTING THOMAS by Robert Reeves. *Crown, \$12.95.* Thomas is a tactlessly flippant, down-at-the-heel academic bucking, not too hopefully, for tenure at a college on the fringes of Boston. He is addicted to betting on the races at Suffolk Downs, and when he wins spectacularly on a horse that was scheduled to lose, all Hades breaks loose. Thomas’s sardonic first-person account of his bumbling attempts to fend off disaster makes a fine murder mystery.

THE PRIVATE MARY CHESNUT edited by C. Vann Woodward and Elizabeth Muhlenfeld. *Oxford, \$8.95.* Mary Chesnut’s Civil War memories have for years been a fine source of information for both historians and novelists. What Chesnut wrote after the war, however, was not what she had written in her diaries during the 1860s. She elaborated events and characterizations and, more important, modified many of her highly acerbic comments on the errors of the Confederate authorities—military and civilian—and on the maddening follies of her friends and kin. She was a witty, intelligent woman, well placed to collect facts, news, and gossip. She combined devotion to the Confederate cause with an utter detestation of slavery and had, by her own admission, a tongue and temper that sometimes got beyond control. In diaries she could let off steam without embarrassment, and she did. What survives of a much longer original text is presented in this well-annotated edition. It is, naturally, overloaded with minor comings and goings (one gets the impression that no well-born southerner ever willingly spent a day at home), but the social trivia is more than counterbalanced by Chesnut’s tooth-and-claw candor.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

Answers to the February Puzzler, “COMPOUND WORDS”



Across. 1. S(COT)TY 4. BIAFRA (anag.) 9. F-LAWLESS 10. I-N(L)ET 11. RENE-W 12. CAUTION (anag.) 13. E(ME)ND 18. MOURN (homophone) 21. DIL-EMMA (*lid* rev.) 22. AROAR (hidden) 24. CAP-ON 25. NUR-SLING (*run* rev.) 26. EN(JO)IN (rev.) 27. ALEPHS (anag.) Down. 1. SL(U)ICE 2. C(INN)A-MON 3. TACET (anag.) 4. BA(A)L (rev.) 5. AS(LEE)P 6. RISE (homophone) 7. A-NSWER (*a* + anag.) 8. TEND (double def.) 11. ROOM (rev.) 14. DEER (homophone) 15. CHAN-GE(ts) 16. FIASCO (hidden) 17. BIANCA (anag.) 19. U(M)PS 20. N-ANTES 23. (b)RUIN Compound. a. M(OC)HA (*co* rev. in *ham* anag.): *coffee & chocolate* b. GR(I-FF)IN: *lion & eagle* c. M(ART)INI: *gin & vermouth* d. BRO-NZE (*Zen* anag.): *tin & copper* e. GREEN (*energy* anag. minus *y*): *blue & yellow* f. SUC(COTAS)H (*tacos* anag.): *lima beans & corn*.

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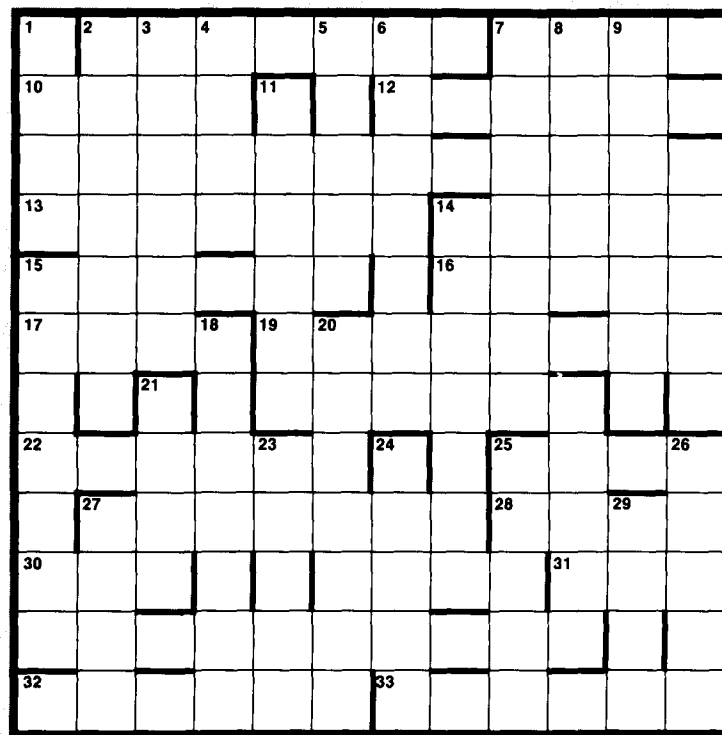
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BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

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Eleven countries of the world are included, unclued, in a round-trip tour of the diagram. The tour forms a single chain, with each country entered in a straight line going left, right, up, down, or diagonally. Countries adjacent in the tour overlap by a single letter, and there the tour may or may not change direction. Solvers/tourists will be guided by answers to Across and Down clues, which are to be entered normally. Answers include four proper nouns, one British spelling, and an unfamiliar word at 14 Across.



Answers to last month's
Puzzler appear on page 125.

ACROSS

2. Loss of \$100 in traveling basket (7)
7. Scum from Alabama and Georgia (4)
10. Dale's partner holds piece of pizza like taffy (4)
12. Soak sailor's eye (6)
13. Eroding ground left alone (7)
14. A nun's broken Islamic law (5)
15. King shaken by her pass (6)
16. Settle a debt with Dad, you bet (5)
(two words)
17. Liquor by pint found in rear (4)
19. Touching up eggs, quill mostly forms a curlicue (8)
22. Travel around middle of Sahara desert (6)
25. Play a violin loudly for sweetheart (4)
27. Meat cooked in ovens (7)
28. People following "Oxygen" sign (4)

30. Alien gets a nibble (3)
31. Fairy back of bookshelf (3)
32. Cabinet member returns for prize (6)
33. Most seasoned steed, guided, bears left (6)

DOWN

1. Three in Germany ride horses around (4)
2. Grass brings periodontal pain in the mouth? (7)
3. I returned astride horse's namesake (6)
4. Pitcher out at first after Cobb makes error (4)
5. Argue speciously for a bit (5)
6. Stop forbidding frankness (7)
7. Satisfy with cooked sausage (7)
8. Crazy card game introduced to New York (5)
9. Particle brought back from the moon kept by General Electric (7)
11. Tavern established with minimal furniture (6)
14. Dashing pigskin! (7)
18. Cleaned up oil pan with a self-operating instrument (7)
20. Queen gets us teed off, being searched (7)
21. Stimulate with water in the ear (4)
23. Priest has six wheels (5)
24. Alcohol to be found around topsy-turvy *Animal House* (5)
25. Plot about two loves panned (5)
26. Army group includes female in poor shape (5)
27. Heard of conceited rooster's perch (4)
29. Mel's chopped up trees (4)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

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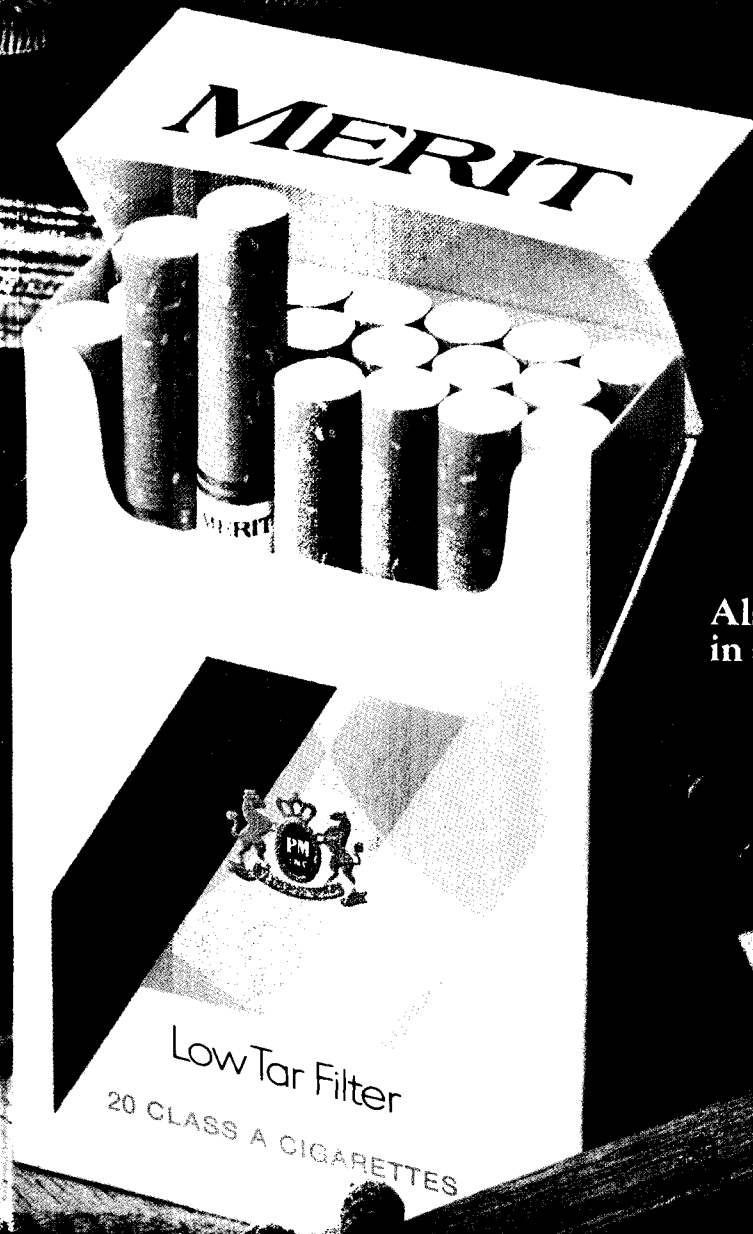
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